

P R E F A C E

What a wonderful opportunity for singers these volumes represent. The diction coaches recorded on the companion CDs are from the staffs of the Metropolitan Opera and The Julliard School, whose specialty is working with singers. I personally have had the opportunity to study Italian with Ms. Caporello and have experienced the sheer delight of learning operatic texts with a linguist who is devoted to the art of singing.

There are two versions of the text recorded for each aria.

1. Recitation

The Coach speaks the text of the aria as an actor would speak it, using spoken diction and capturing the mood. The guttural "R" is pronounced as in speech in French and German. Even in these free recitations, these experienced coaches are obviously informed as to how the text relates to the musical setting.

2. Diction Lessons

Dividing the text of the aria into short phrases, the coach speaks a line at a time very slowly and deliberately, without interpretation, making each word sound distinct. Time is allowed for the repetition of each phrase. In this slow version the French and German coaches adapt the guttural "R" in a manner appropriate for opera singers. The coaches in all languages make small adjustments recommended for singers in these slowly enunciated diction lessons, including elisions and liaisons between word sounds as related to the sung phrase.

There is not one universally used approach to International Phonetic Alphabet. The article before each language should be studied carefully for comprehension of the specific approach to IPA for each language in this edition.

The diction recordings can be used in many ways but a highly recommended plan is this. After carefully working regularly with the recorded diction lesson and the related IPA over several days, one should be able to reach fluency in the aria text. As an exercise separate from singing the aria, the singer should then speak the text freely, as in the diction coach's recitation. The singer likely will be inspired by the recitations recorded by the diction coaches, but after pronunciation is mastered might even begin to discover informed and individual interpretations in reciting the aria text.

By paying attention to the libretto of an aria, or an entire role, apart from the music, the opera singer can begin to understand character and interpretation in a way that would not be possible if the text is only considered by singing it. Just as an actor explores a script and a character from various historical, intellectual and emotional angles, so must the opera singer. Understanding the stated and unstated meanings of the text is fundamental in becoming a convincing actor on the opera stage, or on the opera audition stage. But the opera singer is only half done. After a thorough exploration of the words, one must discover how the composer interpreted the text and how best to express that interpretation. In great music for the opera stage, that exploration can be a fascinating lifetime journey.

Robert L. Larsen
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ko	'swə i	'mɔ ti	mi 'vje ne	a	tur 'bar
co'	suoi	moti	mi viene	a	turbar!
with [the]	its	emotions	to me comes	to	[to] disturb
o	in fe 'li tʃe	'ɔ dʒo	e 'da mo	ri 'sɔl vo	e mi 'pen to
Oh	infelice,	odio	ed amo,	risolvo	e mi pento;
oh	unhappy	I hate	and I love	I resolve	and I repent
ma il	'mi o	'kɔ re	a dʒi 'ta to	e	di 'vi zo
ma il	mio	core	agitato	e	diviso,
but the	my	heart	agitated	and	divided
kwel	ke	'pen so	ke	'sɔn: ɲo	ke 'fiŋ go
quel	che	penso,	che	sogno,	che fingo
that	which	I think	which	I dream	which I imagine
ko	'swə i	'mɔ ti	mi 'vje ne	a	tur 'bar
co'	suoi	moti	mi viene	a	turbar!
with [the]	its	emotions	to me comes	to	[to] disturb

LA RONDINE

music: Giacomo Puccini

libretto: Giuseppe Adami (after a German libretto by Alfred Willner and Heinz Reichert)

Chi il bel sogno di Doretta (La Canzone di Doretta)

ki	il	bel	'sɔn: ɲo	di	do 'ret: ta	po 'te	in do vi 'nar
Chi	il	bel	sogno	di	Doretta	potè	indovinar?
who	the	beautiful	dream	of	Doretta	could	[to] guess
il	'su o	mi 'ster	'ko me	'ma i	fi 'ni		
Il	suo	mister	come	mai	finì?		
the	its	mystery	how	ever	it finished		
a i 'me	un	'dʒɔr no	'u no	stu 'den te			
Ahimè!	un	giorno	uno	studente			
alas	one	day	a	student			
in	'bɔk: ka	la	ba 'tʃɔ				
in	bocca	la	baciò,				
on	mouth	her	kissed				
e	fu	kwel	'ba tʃo	ri ve lat: 'tsjo ne			
e	fu	quel	bacio	rivelazione:			
and	was	that	kiss	revelation			
fu	la	pas: 'sjo ne					
Fu	la	passione!					
it was	the	passion					
'fɔl: le	a 'mo re	'fɔl: le	eb: 'bret: tsa				
Folle	amore!	Folle	ebbrezza!				
crazy	love	crazy	intoxication				
ki	la	sot: 'til	ka 'ret: tsa				
Chi	la	sottile	carezza				
who	the	subtle	caress				
dun	'ba tʃo	ko 'zi	ar 'den te				
d'un	bacio	così	ardente				
of a	kiss	so	ardent				