

Song Literature Research: preparing the poetry – art songs/songs not from a show

DUE TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SONG HAS BEEN ASSIGNED

Due via email or hard copy

*Song Title _____ *Character _____

*Composer _____ *Work _____

*Premiere (where and when) _____ *Poet or librettist _____

1. On what is the work based? A play, novel, historical figure, famous poem?
2. Give a brief description of the composer's historical background.
3. Describe the composer's style. What does that require of the singer? How does that relate to you?
4. How does the accompaniment/orchestra relate to the vocal line? How does the accompaniment support or paint the text? Does the accompaniment play the part of a specific character in the poetry?
5. Describe the character or narrator in the song. Who is the singer in this song?
6. What journey does the character take in the song? How different is he/she at the end of the song as compared to the beginning? Has he/she had a revelation of any kind? Is he/she still stuck n the same place? Has a problem been solved? Acknowledged? What are the stakes? Have they been raised higher or resolved by the end?
7. Describe the location of the singer in general. Is he/she in a scene in a story? Are you walking through the woods? Are you realistically in the text or are you seeing into the past or future? Talk from the perspective of the singer/narrator.
8. List famous authors/poets and visual artists from the time period in which the work was composed and that are native or close to the composer's country of origin. What conclusions can you draw about other art forms being created when this work is created? Are there any similarities?
9. What was happening in history when the work was being written? Wars, philosophical movements, religious movements, etc... (What is really happening in the world outside the walls in which the COMPOSER lives and works?)

*Write out all all lines of your song, leaving an extra line under each printed line. Underneath each printed line, write the subtext. What is the character really saying? For example, someone saying “Your hair looks good today” could mean a variety of things: “You look like you need a compliment” “Wow, what an improvement” “I wish I had the nerve to ask you out” “Your hairdo is really a hair don’t”

Line 1 Original Text

Line 2 Subtext: What the character really means

(Note that if the song is in a foreign language, you will have three lines for this exercise. The first line will be the original text; the second the translation of the text; and the third line being the subtext or deeper meaning of the poetry)

Be sure to consult the Voice Literature Research form for scholarly web sources. Notice that wikipedia is not one of them.

At the end of each song anatomy, list the sources from which you found your information.

I may go back to them and check for accuracy. Be sure to write information in your own words and use your own thoughts. What you think matters. I am interested in those thoughts, assuming they are in harmony with the factual reality of the work.

Have fun.

