

The German Art Song from Mozart to Mahler

Spring 2023, Tuesdays 10-12, Temple Beth-El

Jonathan Shiff

shiffhogan@gmail.com

401-500-3364

Course description:

Before the days of phonograph and radio, if you wanted to listen to music at home you had to perform it yourself. In the nineteenth century, many middle-class homes had pianos, and music publishers sold thousands of songs by major and minor composers to be sung and played within the family or at larger gatherings.

In Germany and Austria in particular, many writers wrote lyric poems (often imitative of folksongs) which were intended to be set to music, and a long series of composers took up the challenge. The songs were ostensibly for domestic consumption, but many were quite challenging and sophisticated and they gradually found a home on the concert stage.

In this class, we will get to know some of the songs (the German word is “Lieder”) of several of the greatest composers from Mozart to Mahler and beyond, and also learn about some of the poets who particularly inspired each one.

Although our focus will be on the poets and composers, the role of the singers and pianists is also important, and the performances I have chosen for listening will give us an overview of some of the most accomplished Lieder interpreters from the 1940s to the present.

Course format:

The class will consist of listening assignments (Youtube videos), presentations on composers or poets, and classroom discussion. The required text, *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder*, which contains all the texts and translations, is readily available new or used from online bookstores.

Class schedule with presentation topics:

March 21

1. Preliminaries and Introductions - class
2. Overview and Origins - Jonathan

March 28

1. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) - Martha Cussler
2. The Ballad - Jonathan (very brief)
3. Carl Loewe (1796-1869)

April 4

1. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (poet, 1749-1832) - Penny Backman
2. Wilhelm Müller (poet, 1794-1827)

April 11

1. Franz Schubert (1797-1828) - Martha Cussler
2. *Die Winterreise* - Patricia Bisshopp

April 18

1. Robert Schumann (1810-1856) - Catherine Bledsoe
2. Heinrich Heine (poet, 1797-1856) - Heidi Smith
3. *Dichterliebe* - Mel Shelly

April 25

1. Joseph von Eichendorff (poet, 1788-1857) - Tom Backman
2. Adalbert von Chamisso (poet, 1781-1838) - Catherine Bledsoe

May 2

1. Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) - Patricia Bisshopp
2. Richard Strauss (1864-1949) - Tom Backman

May 9

1. Hugo Wolf (1860-1903) - Heidi Smith
2. Eduard Mörike (poet, 1804-1875) - Antoinette Breed

May 16

1. Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) - Penny Backman
2. *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (book of folksong texts collected and edited by Brentano and Arnim, 1805-1808) - brief presentation
3. Friedrich Rückert (poet, 1788-1866) - Mel Shelly

May 23

1. 20th Century - Jonathan
2. Wrap-up

Guidelines for presentations

Each participant will be asked to give a presentation on one of the topics in the syllabus, but in this class the presentations will have to be on the short side, 25 minutes max, so that we have time to discuss the listening assignments each week. Presenters may use Google Slides or Powerpoint or just prepare a handout with salient points. (Instructions on using classroom technology will be given separately.)

Some suggestions, but don't feel you need to answer all the questions or cover every aspect:

For presentations on composers:

The most important facts about the composer's life. Were songs an important part of his output? What were his other major works? What poets did he favor? Any particular subjects? Did he have other important activities other than composing (journalism, conducting, performing, etc?) Who were his friends? How has his music been regarded over time? And remember that most class members have little or no knowledge of music theory, so please leave discussions of harmony etc out of your presentation.

For presentations on poets:

The most important facts about the poet's life. Was lyric poetry an important part of his output? What else did he write? Novels, plays, other genres of poetry? What themes/ subjects did he favor in his lyric poetry? Was he involved in the political life of his day? What composers set his songs? How have his works been regarded over time?

For the presentation on *Die Winterreise*:

This is a cycle of 24 poems by Wilhelm Müller as set by Franz Schubert. I am hoping that someone in the class will volunteer to guide us through it. The *Winter's Journey* is the physical and spiritual/emotional journey through a wintry landscape of a man who feels like an outsider, and who reflects on his disappointed love, hope, despair, joyful and painful memories. What are the dominant themes, images, key words? Is there a progression from start to finish? What does Schubert's music add to Müller's poems?

Guidelines for listening

Each week there will be about 30-60 minutes of songs to listen to before the next class, in the form of YouTube videos. You may find it easier to break up your listening into two or three sessions. The texts and translations of the songs can be found in the *Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder*. (FD37 means page 37 of the book). (I will provide texts for the few songs on the syllabus that are not in the FD book.)

It is important that you read the poem before and/or while you listen to the song.

Here are some things you might pay attention to:

Most of the poems are in two or more stanzas. If so, does the composer use the same music for each stanza? Or if not, how is the song structured?

What is the role of the piano part? Is there an introduction to set the mood before the voice enters? Or an interlude that changes the mood? Is the accompaniment intertwined with the vocal part? Does it attempt to imitate natural or other sounds (water, birds, galloping horses, spinning wheel)?

Are there any particularly important words in the poem? How are they treated by the composer? By the singer?

What does the singer do to express the words of the poem? Changes in tone, dynamics (loud or soft), accents?

Overall impressions? (You may not have sufficient musical expertise to pinpoint *why* a particular phrase makes you feel a certain way, but please bring your impressions to the class discussion and we will try to figure it out.)

Syllabus with listening assignments

Week 1, March 21

- 1. Preliminaries and Introductions**
- 2. Overview and Origins**

Listening:

Schubert, Im Frühling (FD251)
Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano
Edwin Fischer, piano
<https://youtu.be/gNQqzb961NU> (4:28)

Schumann, Der Nussbaum (FD127)
Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone
Jörg Demus, piano
<https://youtu.be/xfYpSRiGRjg> (3:12)

Strauss, Schlechtes Wetter (FD328)
Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano
Erik Werba, piano
<https://youtu.be/RlfhnKedC8A> (2:05)

Week 2, March 28

- 1. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**
- 2. The Ballad**
- 3. Carl Loewe (1796-1869)**

Listening:

Mozart:
Das Veilchen (FD101)
Kathleen Battle, soprano
Warren Jones, piano
<https://youtu.be/h0UgDx3Yqwl> (2:21)

Abendempfindung (FD32)
Arleen Auger, soprano
Irwin Gage, piano
<https://youtu.be/Ma9KPdskqd4> (5:29)

Sehnsucht nach dem Frühling (FD340)
Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano
Walter Giesecking, piano

<https://youtu.be/umw-8J-O14o> (2:05)

Loewe:

Edward (FD197)

Wilhelm Strienz, bass

Michael Raucheisen, piano

<https://youtu.be/PuhJV4D-esg> (5:05)

Erlkönig (FD207)

Josef Greindl, bass

Hertha Klust, piano

<https://youtu.be/mly8D-7GCZ8> (3:40)

Week 3, April 4

1. Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

2. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (poet, 1749-1832)

Listening:

Schubert-Goethe:

Erlkönig (FD207)

Jessye Norman, soprano

Phillip Moll, piano

<https://youtu.be/997GpiaBHc0> (4:03)

Gretchen am Spinnrade (FD235)

Elly Ameling, soprano

Jörg Demus, piano

<https://youtu.be/CkrfS4rlWBA> (3:41)

Wanderers Nachtlied ('Über alle Gipfel ist Ruh') (FD392)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone

Jörg Demus, piano

<https://youtu.be/uPZdeAHXAQM> (2:33)

Kennst du das Land (FD270)

Irmgard Seefried, soprano

Erik Werba, piano

<https://youtu.be/IFspwFotcSQ> (4:06)

Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt (FD309)

Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano

Irwin Gage, piano

https://youtu.be/F_NdaYlPd9U (3:01)

More Schubert:

Der Jüngling an der Quelle (FD118)

Jonas Kaufmann, tenor

Helmut Deutsch, piano

<https://youtu.be/u4Q-3WN4C10> (2:11)

Die Forelle (FD153)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone

Gerald Moore, piano

<https://youtu.be/NF9DrUXowBo> (1:58)

Nacht und Träume (FD303)

Janet Baker, mezzo-soprano

Paul Hamburger, piano

<https://youtu.be/YyyIH11WpUE> (4:09)

An die Musik (FD53)

Kathleen Ferrier, contralto

Phyllis Spurr, piano

https://youtu.be/B_jlCMJ77-U (3:24)

Week 4, April 11

1. Wilhelm Müller (poet, 1794-1827)

2. *Die Winterreise*

Listening:

Schubert-Müller:

Die Winterreise (FD181)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone

Alfred Brendel, piano

<https://youtu.be/lORry-ahcHM> (1:13:31)

Week 5, April 18

1. Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

2. Heinrich Heine (poet, 1797-1856)

Listening:

Schumann-Heine:

Dichterliebe, Op. 48 (FD142)

Ian Bostridge, tenor

Leif Ove Andsnes, piano

<https://youtu.be/dV2zrGJz8O8> (27:29)

From *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 (FD287):

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone

Jörg Demus, piano

4. Lieb' Liebchen

<https://youtu.be/72u53asWX3A> (0:46)

5. Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden

<https://youtu.be/1GVY7bbmBvA> (2:59)

9. Mit Myrten und Rosen

<https://youtu.be/ecFYGYdfhpY> (3:40)

Week 6, April 25

1. Joseph von Eichendorff (poet, 1788-1857)

2. Adalbert von Chamisso (poet, 1781-1838)

Listening:

Schumann-Eichendorff:

Liederkreis, Op. 39 (FD284)

Christian Gerhaher, baritone

<https://youtu.be/ZIUxpzh8Nf8> (26:35)

Schumann-Chamisso:

Frauenliebe und -Leben, Op. 42 (FD214)

Brigitte Fassbaender, mezzo-soprano

Irwin Gage, piano

<https://youtu.be/pR7A8HxjFQo> (22:14)

Week 7, May 2

1. Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

2. Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Listening:

Brahms:

Die Mainacht (FD159)

Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzo-soprano

Bengt Forsberg, piano

<https://youtu.be/TEKdzDNUAUE> (3:56)

Von ewiger Liebe (FD390)

Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano

Leonard Bernstein, piano

<https://youtu.be/0Duam34OKis> (4:33)

Auf dem Kirchhofe (FD62)
Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone
Jörg Demus, piano
<https://youtu.be/08qXcH-tze0> (3:05)

Da unten im Tale
Fritz Wunderlich, tenor
Josef Müller-Mayen, piano
<https://youtu.be/jSBVvjOIK1g> (1:49)

Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh (FD387)
Hans Hotter, bass-baritone
Gerald Moore, piano
<https://youtu.be/ilc3hRPmEWU> (4:32)

Richard Strauss:
Allerseelen (FD39)
Jonas Kaufmann, tenor
Helmut Deutsch, piano
<https://youtu.be/b46Gjn77WbE> (2:53)

Cäcilie (FD 78)
Renee Fleming, soprano
Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano
<https://youtu.be/IOsuY4dkZ6o> (2:11)

Die Nacht (FD160)
Anton Dermota, tenor
Richard Strauss, piano
<https://youtu.be/zX1b0L9WWMQ> (2:24)

Morgen (FD301)
Leontyne Price, soprano
David Garvey, piano
<https://youtu.be/g9myQ-Uxk8w> (4:34)

Heimliche Aufforderung (FD238)
Nicolai Gedda, tenor
Erik Werba, piano
<https://youtu.be/2MM9kQBjAp8> (3:05)

Week 8, May 9

1. Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

2. Eduard Mörike (poet, 1804-1875)

Listening:

Wolf-Mörike:

Der Tambour (FD133)

Walter Berry, bass-baritone

Erik Werba, piano

<https://youtu.be/f8mORM7puic> (2:36)

In der Frühe (FD254)

Elly Ameling, soprano

Dalton Baldwin, piano

<https://youtu.be/FFETsGjZu4A> (2:39)

Gebet (FD227)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone

Gerald Moore, piano

<https://youtu.be/omnTJoZoK6A> (2:25)

Im Frühling (FD251)

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano

Gerald Moore, piano

<https://youtu.be/JKFlfCOHRs4> (4:25)

Nimmersatte Liebe (FD309)

Fritz Wunderlich, tenor

Rolf Reinhardt, piano

<https://youtu.be/p3DK6E5OGGY> (2:17)

Verborgenheit (FD384)

Kathleen Ferrier, contralto

Phyllis Spurr, piano

<https://youtu.be/lsA5HchAdU4> 3:46)

Fussreise (FD226)

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone

Gerald Moore, piano

<https://youtu.be/hRw9ObL4yJQ> (2:38)

Schlafendes Jesuskind (FD327)

Christa Ludwig, mezzo-soprano

Erik Werba, piano

<https://youtu.be/l3oVuwIE004> (3:00)

Week 9, May 16

1. **Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)**
2. ***Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (book of folksong texts collected and edited by Brentano and Arnim, 1805-1808)**
3. **Friedrich Rückert (poet, 1788-1866)**

Listening:

Mahler, from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*:
Rheinlegendchen (FD322)
Maureen Forrester, contralto
Felix Prohaska, conductor
<https://youtu.be/qNB55cRNmWc> (3:11)

Das irdische Leben
Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano
George Szell, conductor
<https://youtu.be/WPHBnAV-X9I> (2:47)

Revelge (FD321)
Thomas Allen, baritone
Charles Mackerras, conductor
<https://youtu.be/2dyXV8ZILqA> (6:57)

Mahler-Rückert:
Um Mitternacht (FD383)
Janet Baker, mezzo-soprano
Sir John Barbirolli, conductor
<https://youtu.be/rZmo53IjXzY> (5:56)

Liebst du um Schönheit (FD281)
Margaret Price, soprano
Wolfgang Gönnenwein, conductor
<https://youtu.be/ht1OkPN6Zso> (2:32)

Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n (from *Kindertotenlieder*) (FD271)
Janet Baker, mezzo-soprano
Sir John Barbirolli, conductor
<https://youtu.be/p65tIP3iVsU> (6:01)

Week 10, May 23

1. **20th Century**
2. **Wrap-up**

Listening:

Alban Berg (1885-1935)

From *Seven Early Songs* (1905-08):
Traumgekrönt (FD345)
Christine Schäfer, soprano
Eric Schneider, piano
<https://youtu.be/GqNdOJHEanQ> (2:45)

From *Vier Lieder*, Op. 2 (1909-10):
Warm die Lüfte (FD393)
Mitsuko Shirai, mezzo-soprano
Hartmut Höll, piano
<https://youtu.be/CKCKeAuyimY> (3:01)

Anton Webern (1883-1945)
Vier Lieder, Op. 12 (1915-17)
Marni Nixon, soprano
Robert Craft, piano
<https://youtu.be/AsC9yLdVxik> (4:26)

Drei Lieder, Op. 25 (1934-35)
Halina Lukomska, soprano
Charles Rosen, piano
https://youtu.be/LeQ1p2F8_fc (4:04)

Hanns Eisler (1898-1962)
From *Hollywooder Liederbuch* (1942), text: Bertolt Brecht:
Holger Falk, baritone
Julius Drake, piano
Frühling
<https://youtu.be/iXqRWCQ02ds> (1:47)
Ostersonntag
<https://youtu.be/x9mUAmXkx3g> (1:43)

Hans Werner Henze (1926-2012)
From *Sechs Gesänge aus dem Arabischen* (1997-98):
Selim und der Wind
Ian Bostridge, tenor
Julius Drake, piano
<https://youtu.be/mHGGpOtqVI4> (5:30)