

# ORNAMENTATION INTENSIVE

## ACT 7 - TEXTUAL AND SCORE CONSIDERATIONS

In ornamentation, and in music in general, there are certain gestures that are stronger than others, and that is often dependent on context. Some examples: extreme tessitura, a long dissonant note, a wide leap in a mostly-stepwise melody, an odd but appropriate chromatic note. Other times, it could just be a few extra notes compared to the rest of the ornaments, or vice versa. Sometimes these strong ideas may work musically without words, but in vocal music, we have to take into consideration the text.

It's not quite as simple as "strong ornaments on strong syllables", although that could be a good start. Sometimes a strong idea may work on a weak syllable in the middle of the phrase, but it doesn't at the end. For a simple example, sometimes a singer (or conductor, heaven forbid) will place an appoggiatura on a final piano syllable of a phrase, because it sounds good musically, but it doesn't really make sense from a text perspective. (I never say never though, because that's the trouble with rules in music.)

The other thing to watch out for – challenging ornaments placed on difficult vowels.

The best way to figure out if an ornament makes sense with the text is to just sing it through while paying attention to the words!

In his treatise, Hiller considers basic rhythmic alterations a form of ornamentation, whereas Tosi and Agricola make no mention of this. He describes how adding a dot to a note can make the text come alive. This is similar to what we discussed in Vaccai – that something notated in an even rhythm may not need to be performed evenly if the lingual rhythm is uneven. Hiller, in this case, is being more specific about creating dotted rhythms as a musical gesture.

### **Some instrumental considerations**

If you are ornamenting a piece for performance with orchestra, it would behoove you to take a look at the full score, to check for any instruments that play in unison with the voice, or perhaps a prominent countermelody. A particular ornament or variation may not work in counterpoint with an orchestral instrument. Fortunately, in this era, the orchestra does not often double the voice. (Unless you're a bass in a Baroque opera, in which case that might be most of your arias.)

Piano reductions can be complicated, and occasionally editors may choose to omit a melodic doubling with the voice for the sake of an accompaniment pattern. This happens, albeit rarely, in bel canto arias. On the flip side, in Baroque arias, sometimes the editor has realized a cadence that only the basso continuo is playing.

This idea of making sure your ornaments work with the instruments is obviously applicable to works with piano/lute/etc. Usually there is no additional full score to check. If you do not have access to the full score, listening to the piece should help!

If full scores are daunting, ask a friend! The important thing is: make sure your ornaments make sense before getting them into your voice. You don't want to get to rehearsals and then realize that they don't work. (Although, hopefully you will be at a point where you can access your toolkit and be able to make adjustments easily!)

A full study of counterpoint would necessitate multiple intensives, so for our practical purposes, here are a few basic guidelines:

- In general, you will want to keep to simpler ornaments and variations if you are singing in unison or with a countermelody. Remember your mordents, turns, and appoggiaturas!
- Thirds and sixths are the choice consonances. They are your friends. Be sure, however, to check the harmony – what works a third above often does not work a third below.
- No parallel seconds, fourths, fifths, and sevenths, in fast or slow music.
- In fact, in slow music, try to avoid any ornamentation that would give too many sustained seconds, fourths, fifths, and sevenths. A possible exception to this rule would be adding a simple appoggiatura, usually from above.

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### Exercise Sheet 7

Rossini: *Ecco ridente* (Barbiere)

weak syllable, high note

To me, adding an appoggiatura here sounds strange because of the weak syllable.

Sing it in your language to see if it makes sense.

cie - lo spun - ta la bel - la au - ro - ra,  
wak - ing, Dawn through the dark - ness is break - ing.

Weak syllable, but strong ornament as a linking device to highlight

e tu non sor - gi an - co - ra e puoi dor - mir co -  
Why do you lie a - sleep - ing, Oh, when will you a -

passing

si? Sor - gi, mia dol - ce spe - me, vie - ni, bell'i - dol  
- rise? Wake! Oh, a - wake, my la - dy, Rise to the song I

tr

a piacere

col cant

mi - o, ren - di men cru - do, oh Di - o! lo stral, lo  
sing you! Rise to the love I bring you As here I

Hiller treatise

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(original)

A) Freu - de die Fül - le, und lieb - li - ches We - sen

B) Freu - de die Fül - le, und lieb - li - ches We - sen

However, it would be better not to add it to all of them because otherwise the melody would have a somewhat limping effect. [the dots]

Altogether, in regard to free ornamentation, the singer, when adding ornaments to beautify a melodic line, must take care not to rely on only one type of ornament and must aim for variety. However, when one cannot produce changes in the ornaments themselves, then the manner in which they are employed should be varied. In this respect, example B above is certainly better than the following two:

1) Freu - de die Fül - le, und lieb - li - ches We - sen.

2) Freu - de die Fül - le, und lieb - li - ches We - sen.

Moreover, there is something in the third measure of the second example which no normal ear can easily tolerate. The offensiveness lies not in the lengthened short syllable, but rather in the upward leap. In a case like this, a downward leap

(although I hear it as both)

beguiles the ear so that it perceives nothing that runs contrary to the declamation. Compare the following two examples with one another; the verdict is obvious.

Freu - de die Fül - le, und lieb - li - ches We - sen.

Freu - de die Fül - le, und lieb - li - ches We - sen.

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Handel: Tornami a vagheggiar (Alcina)

*Allegro.*

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Orch. { (Violini e Oboe unisoni.)  
(Viola.)  
La diva  
↳ ALCINA.  
(Bassi.)

Pianoforte  
Realization

*Allegro, ma non troppo.*

Viol. Violin and oboe in unison

Tor - na - mia vagheg - giar,  
Kehr; ach, in meinen Arm!

te so - lo vuol a - mar quest' a - ni - ma fe - del, ca - ro mio be -  
dir nur treu in - nig warm weih' ich mein gan - zes Sein, dir all' mein Stre -

no violin

Oboe colla parte.

- ne, ca - ro! tor - na - mi a va - gheg - giar,  
- ben, Theu - rer! keh'r; ach, in mei - nen Arm!

\* oboe plays in unison with soprano

H.W.27.

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\* Oboe still playing in unison with soprano

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(4th, but okay in an arpeggiated figure)

3rds

tor-na-mia va gheg-giar, keh'r'ach, in meinen Arm!

3rds below 3rds above

te so-lo vuol'a mar, te so-lo vuol'a mar quest' a-ni-ma fe-del, ca-ro  
dir nur treu-in-nig uarm, dir nur treu-in-nig uarm weih' ich mein gan-zes Sein, dir all' mein Stre-ben, dir nur treu-in-nig uarm

unison

Typical variation: 

senza Oboe.

often the upper instruments do drop out at cadences, but not here.

Violin part???

parallel 5ths

parallel 2nds

But this doesn't work: 

ok: 

con l'Oboe.

quest' a-ni-ma fe-del, ca-ro weih' ich mein gan-zes Sein, dir all'

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Hiller : Vocal Performance and Ornamentation

### Aria mit willkürlicher Veränderung. [Aria with Arbitrary Variation.]

Veränderung.

Vom Dienst der Cre - a - tur ver - las - sen, um -

Adagio.

Vom Dienst der Cre - a - tur ver - las - sen, um -

ringt von de - nen die dich has - sen, trägstdu, mein Heil, die Last — al -

ringt von de - nen die dich has - sen, trägstdu, mein Heil, die Last — al -

lein, die Last,

lein, die Last,

Handwritten annotations include: *ant.*, *(Nach)*, *ant. A*, *A*, *N*, *A*, *P*, *App.*, *Syncopations*, *Chords:*, *I*, *IV (Pedal 4)*, *(4)*, *5*, *Gt*, *7*, *vi*, *I<sup>b</sup>*, *IV*, *V*, *I*, *V<sup>b</sup>*, *Dt*, *A<sup>7</sup>*, *# better here than 4*, *lower N*, *N*, *N*, *upper N*, *N*, *Skeleton:*, *A*, *A*, *A*, *A*.

*IV* || You can see that variations begin here.  
*Dt* || There is a harmonic sequence.  
 Also the text disappears.

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Note this typical Baroque effect where the text is syncopated.

the pattern is adjusted to be in 3rds

(Instead of  $\begin{matrix} \text{ca} & \text{ro} \\ \text{ca} & \text{ro} \end{matrix}$ )

(Oboe)

tr

senza Oboe.

rìlard. a tempo.

colla parte.

basso continuo only

Tutti.

(Viol.)

H. W. 27.

### Treatise on vocal performance and ornamentation

*- syncopations*  
*- same placement of pitches, text rhythm changes*

*tr* *pedal* *A* *3* *A* *5 P P* *tr* *ant.*

die Last al - lein, trägst du die Last al -  
die Last al - lein, trägst du die Last al -

Vom *Back to ornamenting (D+)* *A* *4N* *A* *3* *3* *tr* *ant.*

lein. Vom Dienst der *tr* *ant.*  
lein. Vom Dienst der

*I* *sync.* *3* *3* *Sync* *A*

Cre - a - tur ver - las - sen, um - ringt von de - nen die dich  
Cre - a - tur ver - las - sen, um - ringt von de - nen die dich

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On arbitrary variation of the aria

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has - sen, trägst du, mein Heil, die Last al -

has - sen, trägst du, mein Heil, die Last al -

*Handwritten notes: A, w on p, (with C4), p*

lein, trägst du, mein Heil, die Last al -

lein, trägst du, mein Heil, die Last al -

*Handwritten notes: A, (variations over same harmony), 6*

lein, die Last,

lein, die Last,

*Handwritten notes: Sync., C# against C# in bass, therefore variations can stray farther, repetition, Variations ->, (Augmented 6th)*

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142 Treatise on vocal performance and ornamentation

**Gt:**  
**Chords:**

*A* *A* *A*

*V* *V<sup>b</sup>* *IV* *IV<sup>6</sup>*  
*D+* *G+* *C+* *D?*

*ant. A* *P (9)*

die Last al -

die Last al -

*V<sup>b</sup>* *IV<sup>b</sup>* *Ger<sup>b</sup>* *IV* *I* *V<sup>b</sup>*  
*G+* *C+* *E<sup>b</sup>x<sup>b</sup>* *D+* *G+* *D?*

*N* *sync.* *sync.*

lein, trägst du, trägst du die Last al - lein; vom Dienst der

lein, trägst du die Last al - lein; vom Dienst der

*N* *A* *N* *A* *P* *tr*

*vi* *V<sup>b</sup>* *I* *IV* *Cad<sup>6</sup>* *V?* *I*  
*e-* *D?* *G+* *C+* *D?* *G+*



Bellini: <sup>2.</sup> Dolente immagine di Fille mia

*Ornament*  
- This song doesn't need flashy ornaments, but it has repeating phrases that could use some interesting little ones.

8. *Andante flebile*

The piano introduction is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with a descending eighth-note pattern, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving bass lines.

CANTO

*p*  
Do.lente im.ma - gi.ne di Fil.le mi - a, Per.chè sì squal.li.da mi si edi ac.

*pp*

The first line of the vocal melody is marked piano (*p*). The lyrics are: "Do.lente im.ma - gi.ne di Fil.le mi - a, Per.chè sì squal.li.da mi si edi ac." The piano accompaniment is marked pianissimo (*pp*) and features a steady accompaniment of chords and moving lines in both hands.

*Small flourish*

can - to? Che più de - si - de - ri? Che più de - si - de - ri? Di . rot - to

The second line of the vocal melody includes a "Small flourish" indicated by a red bracket over a note. The lyrics are: "can - to? Che più de - si - de - ri? Che più de - si - de - ri? Di . rot - to". The piano accompaniment continues with a consistent accompaniment.

pian - to Io sul tuo ce - ne.re ver.sai fi - nor, Io sul tuo

The third line of the vocal melody continues the melody. The lyrics are: "pian - to Io sul tuo ce - ne.re ver.sai fi - nor, Io sul tuo". The piano accompaniment remains consistent throughout.

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ce - nere ver - sai fi - nor, Io sul tuo ce - ne - re ver - sai fi - nor, Io sul tuo

ce - ne - re ver - sai fi - nor. *Temi che im-*

- me - mo - re de' sa - cri giu - ri Io possa ac - cen - dermi ad al - tra

*Small flourish*

fa - ce, Io pos - sa ac - cen - dermi ad al - tra fa - ce? Om - bra di

123282

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Fil - lide, ri - posa in pa - ce, ri - posa in pa - ce; È inestin-gui - bile l'anti.co ar.

*Try to keep this E because it's different than the B in other phrases.*

-dor; Ombra di Fil - lide, ri - posa in pa - ce, ri - posa in pa - ce; È inestin-

-gui - bile l'anti.co ar.dor, È inestin-gui - bile l'antico ar.dor, È inestin-

-gui - bile l'an.ti.co ar.dor.

123282