

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen (the wrath of hell boils in my heart) is the second aria sung by The Queen of the Night from Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte* (The Magic Flute), a *singspiel* opera where most of the lyrics are conversational and sung expressively. Mozart wrote it with his sister-in-law, Josepha Hofer, in mind. Hofer was known to have a predominant upper register and became the first Queen of the Night when Opera *Die Zauberflöte* premiered in 1791.¹

Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen is an advanced level repertoire. To sing the aria, a singer is expected to have a proper solid foundation of classical vocal technique, *coloratura* vocal technique, and be in a good mental and physical state without disregarding vocal health. The components of classical vocal technique are posture/alignment, respiration, phonation and registers, resonance, diction, and expression.² These components are extended techniques trained after singers are made aware of *appoggio* breathing technique, pitch matching, rhythm exercise, and sound production. The *coloratura* vocal technique is a more advanced skill that deals with speed and agility of the voice.

¹ Timothy Judd and DeForest, "The Queen of the Night: Opera's Most Deranged Mother?," *The Listeners' Club*, last modified May 9, 2019, accessed June 4, 2022.

² Jon Noyes, *Vocal And Choral Techniques* 1, no. 1 (2011): p.2.

However, to perform as the Queen of the Night in a professional opera theatre, only singers with dramatic *coloratura* soprano vocal type are eligible due to their high tessitura that is able to imitate the sound of a flute instrument with intense clarity and excellence.³ Due to the lyrics of the second aria, a dramatic vocal colour or *fach* is required to support the character of the song as well as the role. The aria consists of melisma and staccato notes to be sung at a high register with a fast tempo, thus it is more well-suited for a *coloratura* soprano to sing.

The second aria of the Queen of the Night has intrigued the writer ever since watching Diana Damrau's performance in the Royal Opera House in 2003 through YouTube. The writer's interests further developed when she finds the tune, drama, and *coloratura* phrases of this aria to be appealing. In this aria, the Queen of the Night spills her rage towards Sarastro, whom she felt has been taking everything that she values from her, including her daughter. The music, drama, and the physical features of the Queen of the Night integrate successfully and established a phenomenal performance. Although the queen is often dismissed as evil, frightening, and vengeful, people often disregard the story behind it.⁴ The performance has built a strong interest for the writer to dig deep into the process of rehearsing the aria with the proper vocal techniques as well as its artistic vision.

The challenges of the aria include *coloratura* vocal technique, precise intonation, mastering lower to upper vocal registers, fathoming the Queen of the Night's character, while constantly looking after the singer's mental, physical and

³ Ibid, p.2.

⁴ Michael Cantrell, *Voice Types Of Opera Villains: Collaborative Study Of Vocal Tessituras Of Villains And Heroes In Opera* 19, no. 8 (2015): p.2.

vocal health. The most famous line of this aria is the staccato and melisma section from bars 24 – 43. These 19 bars require high amount of energy, breath support and concentration to secure the intense interval leaps from C6 – F6 with precise intonation and dramatic tension of the aria. Note that the C6 – F6 notes are to be sung in the upper vocal register, thus if a singer struggles to control her breath or loses her concentration, it will affect the intonation, flow, and intensity of the drama. The high level of intensity in these 19 bars makes the aria special from other opera arias and draws the attention of children to adult listeners.

Besides the vocal challenges of this aria, the character of the Queen of the Night is also as demanding. The Queen of the Night is in a situation where she is gradually losing everything she values to Sarastro and her daughter is about to leave her. There is a mixture of feelings such as pain, fury, fear, and jealousy in this aria that must be portrayed. It is a performer's job to create gestures and expressions that audience can understand and relate. Combined with the magnificent costume and eccentric makeup, the Queen of the Night is definitely a role that audience looks forward to watch. Based on the writer's observation, this particular aria is both vocally and artistically advanced, but it certainly engages people to try singing it.

Acknowledging the challenges that this aria brings, a singer must procure a solid classical singing foundation and professional training to prevent any vocal mishaps. Otherwise, singing this aria could be a form of vocal abuse, which could lead to laryngitis, vocal nodules, and vocal polyps.⁵ The side effects of vocal abuse

⁵ Peter R. LaPine, "The Relationship Between The Physical Aspects Of Voice Production And Optimal Vocal Health". *Music Educators Journal* 94, no. 3 (2008): p.25.

may not appear immediately, but the vocal cords swell gradually until it damages.⁶ Therefore, a singer who wishes to sing this aria or even playing the role of the Queen of the Night must be exceptionally aware of her mind, body, and voice.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the *coloratura* vocal technique and artistic vision of *Der hölle rache kocht in meinem Herzen* by the Queen of the Night from Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte*. The research is conducted using a qualitative case study method with approach to classical voice background and experience. The data is collected through literature study, direct observation and structured interviews with three professional opera singers and three vocal coaches who have previously performed or taught this aria.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How to acquire the *coloratura* vocal technique in the staccato and melisma section from bar 24 – 43 of *Der Hölle Rache Kocht in Meinem Herzen* with good intonation?
2. How should a singer balance between the *coloratura* vocal technique with the artistic vision of *Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen*?

⁶ Ibid, p.25.

1.3 Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to analyze:

1. The *coloratura* vocal technique in the staccato and melisma section from bar 24 – 43 of *Der Hölle Rache Kocht in Meinem Herzen* with good intonation.
2. The balance between the *coloratura* vocal technique with the artistic vision of *Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen*.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of Research

The analysis and evaluation in this research are based on the Queen of the Night's second aria *Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen*, which covers:

1. The *coloratura* vocal technique in the staccato and melisma section from bar 24 – 43 of *Der Hölle Rache Kocht in Meinem Herzen* with good intonation.
2. The balance between the *coloratura* vocal technique with the artistic vision of *Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen*.

1.5 Significance of Research

This research is expected to provide detailed information about learning and acquiring the *coloratura* vocal technique used in *Der Hölle Rache Kocht in Meinem Herzen* in a systematic approach for the writer, classical singers, and Pelita Harapan University's Conservatory of Music.

1.6 Research Writing Structure

This research is written in five chapters which covers:

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes background of research; research questions; purpose of research; scopes and limitations of research; significance of research; and research writing structure.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes vocal technique; artistic vision; and framework of thinking.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes research concept; research procedure; research instruments; data collection method; and data analysis technique.

CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND STUDY

This chapter includes research analysis; research study; and research result.

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

This chapter includes the research result; implementation; and needs for further research.