

The Analysis of the Characters and Singing Performance of Juan Sheng in the Opera “Broken Death”

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Abstract: Opera “hurt die” is the famous composer Mr Shi Guangnan according to the modern famous writer Lu Xun, the novel adapted from an opera, premiered in 1981, is a typical four-act opera, including “summer” “autumn” “winter” “spring”, in the history of Chinese opera, is China’s first lyrical national opera. According to the background of the original novel and opera creation, combined with the creation situation, creative characteristics and the development of the plot, with trickle aria “she took my heart” “golden autumn light” stab a sword to my heart “ three songs for the study object, from the three aria plot and character analysis, music analysis and character analysis and analysis, singing and processing, research and analysis, combined with their own practice in the concert, theoretical analysis and stage practice summary concise, to form their own understanding of the work, hope to reveal the tension of music and the charm of opera, rich opera singing and stage effect.

Keywords: Opera “hurt the death”; Juan Sheng sang “She took my heart”; “The Golden Autumn Light”; “A sharp sword stabbed to my heart”

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The opera “The Passing” is an opera adapted by the famous Chinese composer Shi Guangnan based on the novel of the same name by the famous modern Chinese writer Lu Xun. This opera is a typical four-act opera divided into “Summer”, “Autumn”, “winter” and “Spring”. Premiered in 1981, it is China’s first lyric national opera. Different from other operas, the main feature of the opera is that it has fewer characters, and its male and female singers (baritone and mezzo-soprano) are the connecting part of the whole opera. The singing passages mainly focus on the characters of the male protagonist Juan Sheng and the female heroine Zijun, which greatly increases the difficulty and endurance of the male and female protagonists in singing. “She Took My Heart”, “Golden Autumn Light”, “A Sword that stabbed at my heart” and other verses have distinct personalities. In the opera, they reflect the mood of the hero Juan Sheng in different periods, and play a role in connecting the previous and the next, promoting the development of the plot. In singing, the singer should maintain the sound quality of continuous high register, and have abundant emotions to make the music more vivid and promote the development of the plot.

1. Introduction to the plot of the opera

1.1 Act 1: “Summer”

“Summer” is the first act of the opera. It depicts the story of a young man and woman who fall in love after a chance meeting on a charming summer evening. On a summer afternoon, Juan Sheng sang the first aria of the play “She Took My Heart” in front of the bright wisteria flowers, which reflects that Juan Sheng is a young man who advocates free love and resists feudal ethics. He is full of hope for the future and has a persistent desire to get rid of the secular world for love. The first act “Summer” uses a large number of verses and lines to introduce the two people love each other, revealing deep love and the warmth of summer, but with a letter of resignation from a trickle of units, everything began to change.

1.2 Act 2: Autumn

After the sad interlone song, Juan Sheng began to struggle for the first time and loudly sang “Let’s Fly to a New Life”. He let

Zijun see that Juan Sheng was still Juan Sheng, who was brave and eager to pursue love and break through feudal ethics, and they regained confidence. Holding the returned manuscripts in his hand, Juan Sheng lamented why the autumn light was so short in the Golden Autumn Light. This was the first time that Juan began to doubt himself. His confusion and indignation about life led him to estrangement with Zijun, and at the same time, he showed weakness in character.

1.3 Act 3: Winter

After the curtain song, the female singer's aria Winter is Coming continues the melancholy meaning of Autumn, which also indicates that Juan Sheng and Zijun's feelings have entered the harsh winter. Zijun is still an advanced woman desperate for love, while Juan Sheng is completely crushed by the reality. She even thinks that the only good result for both of them is to separate from Zijun. After a quarrel, she even says "I don't love you anymore". After lamenting her Unfortunate life, Zijun chooses to end her own life to prove her faithfulness to love, while Juan Sheng is sad and a poor man defeated by reality.

1.4 Act 4: Spring

In Spring, there is only one quartet, "The Ancient City Silently expects Spring". In this quartet, the flowing verse of "I bury my truth deeply with my oblivion for Zijun's funeral" just echoes the opera names "Injury" and "death", expressing the sad ending of the hero and heroine from injury to death.

2. Music analysis and singing analysis of trickling singing

2.1 Light, pleasant and loving excerpts

"She Took My Heart" The homophonic decomposition chord makes the music from the beginning of the prelude into the rich summer atmosphere, to express Juan's mood at the moment and the desire for the emergence of the sweetheart. The musical structure of this work is no reproduction single trilogy the main tonal structure of the whole piece is: D major -- G major -- b minor -- A major -- D major The same tonality repeat. It is necessary to sing with a passionate mood. After the lively prelude, the style of accompaniment changes suddenly, the speed of the music slows down, and the accompaniment body which is mainly composed of column and chord is a little heavy and hesitant. As the third part of the accompaniment reproduces the first part of the accompaniment, Juan Sheng seems to be relieved.

The musical score is presented in four systems. The first system is for Piano (Piano) in 3/4 time, marked '稍快' (Allegretto) and 'mf'. The second system is for Piano (Pno.) marked '中速' (Moderato) and 'mp'. The third system is for Piano (Pno.) marked '稍快' (Allegretto) and 'p'. The fourth system is for Voice (消生) and Piano (Pno.) marked 'mp', with the lyrics '风儿轻' (Wind is light) appearing under the voice line.

Entering the singing part, the accompaniment uses a large number of connecting lines and the accompaniment pattern of broken chords to constantly promote the progress of the music, and every two bars is the same rhythm as the unit to maintain the sense of progress of the music. Bar 36 is a high point in Part I.

Analysis of singing

The music style of “She Took My Heart” is relaxed and lively. The beginning of the verse is mostly in the middle and low voice area. For example, the first line “The wind is gentle, the locust leaves are shaking, and I hold my breath to listen” should be sung in a form of telling. When singing “My mind is so flustered, my heart is so excited”, I should open my mouth as much as possible and keep my voice in one position. Then I should say, “Wisteria, tell me, but Zijun is really coming?” In music, a quick and slow processing should be done to pave the way for the next sentence to return to the original speed, so that there is a contrast between sentences, so that the music is closer to the plot and better reflects the plot. In the following sentence of “Beautiful wisteria”, the two words “flower” and “ah” are in the sound of the small word group 2 #F, which involves the closing problem of the tenor. It is easy to sing the white voice when singing, and keep singing the sentence after the closing state, after which the speed of the interplay will be accelerated, which is to remember to keep the original musical feeling to the chanting of “ah”. The next sentence, “Reading is like Zijun talking, but I can see her smile when I close my eyes”, has the same feeling as the previous sentence, “But Zijun is really coming”, both of which use a slow tone to emphasize the fast tone, showing the hero Juan Sheng’s ardent but shy yearning for Zijun. In the last three consecutive “Zijun”, the emphasis is processed, the intensity and emotion are deepened each time, and the musicality is constantly strengthened. When the last line is “Come on, Zijun”, the voice is completely released and the song is performed until the end of the song.

2.2 Selection of lost, weak and lonely

“Golden Autumn Light” is the first time that the hero Juan Sheng’s psychological attitude towards Zijun changes. He begins to doubt his original choice and cherish the memory of the good time before. The music starts from 2/4 time and starts with polyphonic texture as the introduction. The high and low parts of the semi-decomposed rhythm are alternating with each other, and the mood of the music is filled with the artistic conception of Fantasia, which sets the tone for the whole work. The tone of the song is D major and performed at a medium and slow speed.

At the beginning of bar 17, the lead is unstable, revealing the theme of the music and the singer’s helpless state of mind. A succession of ambiguous harmonies on the accompaniment further emphasized this artistic conception, and then a few sigh of departure to 30 bars highlighted the singer’s confusion about life.

The singing of this part needs to pay attention to the alternations between singing and instrumental music, and the lyrics appear lonely and confused. At the end of section 31, “Everything” starts to use the stepped melody, which promotes the progress of the music and deepens the hazy feeling of the later part. From section 39 to section 50, it adopts the accompaniment texture of the lyrics of the rhyming style combined with the column chord, which vividly reflects the sad meaning of “autumn”.

Since bar 53, the music has entered a new stage, the overall speed is accelerated, and the vocal range is greatly increased, and the singing difficulty is increased, until bar 91, the first wave of climax ends. However, the difficulty of this work lies in that after the end of one wave of climax, the next musical climax comes one after another, and the accompaniment becomes more urgent and powerful. After the outburst of emotions in section 106, everything becomes lonely. The music adopts the technique of reappearance with the theme to highlight the theme of the whole music “Autumn light”. When the high pitch is the end of the whole song, the pitch area drops sharply at bar 123 and then rises again, greatly enhancing the auditory effect of the audience.

Analysis of singing

The aria “Golden Autumn Light” can be said to play a crucial role in the whole play, and it is also a turning point for the change of love between Juan Sheng and Zijun. The prelude is introduced by the theme in the prelude song of “Autumn”. The first line should have a lamenting and desolate tone, and after a lyric, the accompaniment seems to cater to the general melody. The treatment here is the opposite of Zijun in She Took My Heart, which goes from strong to weak when the singer sings, “I feel like I’m floating in the fog of night, I can’t see the horizon of dawn.” When two sentences rhyme, it is actually brewing their own emotions. The difficulty of this aria is that the chorus basically lingers on the g of the two groups of small words. Not only does it need a high note, but the words such as “autumn”, “thirst” and “light” in the lyrics are all very difficult to pronounce, which greatly increases the difficulty of the singer’s singing, and the speed of the song is constantly hurried along with the music. The climax of this work can be divided into two parts. The sentence “you don’t leave, you don’t dissipate” is the biggest breaking point in the middle of the whole climax. Moreover, most of the scales are composed of semitones, which requires the singer to take care of the intonation problem while singing the high notes. In the first chorus of the second paragraph, “Ah”, there is a lengthening mark on the spectrum. From its own practice, it is suggested that the singer should do what he can and pay attention to the integrity of the whole song. In singing, the singer needs to unify the position

of the voice, pay attention to the words and breath must not have a trace of slack.

2.3 Regret, cynicism and helplessness

The musical structure of “A Sword Piercing my heart” is a single trilogy without reappearance (narrative), and the main tonal structure of the whole song is F big -- d small -- C big -- F big -- B flat big -- F big. The work continues to develop on the musical theme of Zijun’s aria “Zijun in Memory”.

At the 10th bar of the music, the accompaniment texture suddenly becomes complicated, the speed of the music accelerates, and the singing becomes exciting. At the 18th bar, the accompaniment texture becomes sparse again. The singing is just like a speech, and the narration-like singing describes the plot by combining the strength and intensity. This progression breaks out in bar 35, where the piece is augmented by the use of a large number of connecting lines that enhance the dramatic conflict.

Musical score for voice and piano. The voice part (labeled '润生') has lyrics: "子君走了, 子君走了, 冷清清, 孤单单,". The piano accompaniment (labeled 'Pno.') includes dynamic markings *mp* and *p*.

Bars 107 to 122 are actually in the final brewing. The most interesting thing is that there is a tonality ambiguity in bars 119 to 122, which means that the music has become a little hysterical. It also fits the mood of the music. In bars 126 to 129, the helpless hum is uttered, “A sword piercing my heart.” The last High C is the tenor’s sword test stone, which highlights the musicality and reflects the singer’s singing level, and also lays the final tone for the music and makes a crucial foundation for the following plot.

Musical score for voice and piano. The voice part (labeled '润生') has lyrics: "转身跑远? 啊! 啊!" and "它是来找". The piano accompaniment (labeled 'Pno.') includes dynamic markings *mf* and *f*.

Analysis of singing

“Stab to my heart a sword” this piece of work has a wide range of sound, at the end of the whole song has a high c tone, for the singer’s quality and conditions have higher requirements. The first line is endlessly sad and cowardly, where the singer should be slightly weepy and mournful, followed by “cold, alone, and empty.” You’re talking about your situation, and you’re lowering your voice a little bit. “Broken hearts... Blow away the dreams.” With the crescendo to do processing, reflecting the characters of real life litigation and with the front weak have a sharp contrast with the speed of the interlude, “Who is it! Who is it?” The voice of doubt, disbelief, even expectation that the singer should be singing here is transformed into eager expectation as the knock intensifies. The singer needs to sing songs in a hurry, tone sense to be more vivid, such as the need to perform, with

a door action to carry on the connection, leads to the last sentence, “Ah, God!” This one, not only sings of surprise, but also of despair, where the trickle turns from eager expectation to deep disappointment. Then sing Dog Asuits in the same position, to “Ah, little Asuits. Ah, little Ahu “in the thick sadness, as if to find a trace of comfort. While singing “Why don’t you Come in...” The tone of voice should be full of doubt and longing, and the handling of the voice should also be urgent and the tone should be enhanced. When she sang, “Do you feel cold and lonely?” her emotions exploded. As the interplay speeds up, the singer needs to follow the pace of the accompaniment to the next part of the song. In the following music treatment, we should use controlled growling and controlled venting to sing “ah”. Here, we should pay attention not to use up our strength. We should do “sing five points, save five points”.

3. The singing enlightenment of the trickling verse

3.1 The singer’s musical ability

First of all, the singer must have the vocal range to sing the whole work. For the trickle part of the opera, the vocal range is actually a challenge for the tenor. The two-octave vocal range from central C to high C throughout the work scares many tenors away. Secondly, the musical sense is stronger, and to be precise, it needs a good enough intonation. In the duet of Juan Sheng and Zijun in the opera, nearly half of the duets are carried out in the narrative tone, so it is impossible to control these passages without a good intonation. The third is musical literacy. In an opera, the emotions of the characters are constantly changing as the story progresses. The same is true of the singing of each character. In different singing passages, there are different musical performances, and these performances are based on the rhythm, strength, speed, coordination with the accompaniment and coordination with other roles, all of which are testing the basic musical accomplishment of the singer. Finally, singing ability refers to that before singing the whole opera, one must go through a long time of scientific and standardized vocal music learning, accumulate a lot of singing experience and stage experience, so as to achieve the ability to sing on the stage.

3.2 Other abilities the singer should have to play the role

The charm of opera art lies not only in the singing, but also in the performance, the lines and the combination of the figure and position on the stage, all of which are indispensable. The opera “The Passing” is adapted from the novel “The Passing” of the same name by the modern Chinese writer Lu Xun. Before singing, it is necessary to read the novel and enhance one’s literary ability, so that one can accurately grasp each plot. Moreover, the performance ability, in the singing of the works of the movement and manner, should be excelsior, so as to sing with emotion and voice accurately every selection.

Conclusion

By singing the trickling part of the opera, the author not only got professional improvement but also gained a lot of experience. From the aspect of artistic features, the opera adopts the alternating form of aria and narrative and poetic lines and lyrics. Through Juan Sheng’s inner monologue, it vividly expresses the deep feeling in love, the joy after marriage, the fear after unemployment, the pain when the relationship is on the verge of breaking up, the despair after breaking up, and Juan Sheng’s regret and grief after Zijun’s death. The lyrics are full of strong emotional color. In terms of the overall structure of the opera, the lyricism is rich, and the opera contains strong lyricism in the narrative process of the whole tragedy, such as the deep feeling between Juan Sheng and Zijun, the joy when they were newly married, the fear after they lost their jobs, the pain when they were on the verge of breaking up, the despair after breaking up, and the remorse and sorrow after Zijun’s death.

At the beginning of the opera, there are wisteria flowers near the hall where Juan Sheng lives. The furnishings and surroundings of the hall are the same as they were a year ago, but Zijun will never come again. Through the presentation of the environment where things have changed, it shows the emotion of a trickle of heavy sadness. In terms of layout, the opera has a clear vein and a compact structure. The opera unfolds the plot with the birth, development and end of the tragedy of love between Zijun and Juan Sheng as the clue, and expresses the fluctuations, withering and fading of their love with the changes of late spring, late autumn and winter, with a clear vein and ingenious conception. At the beginning of the opera, it was for the love of Zijun, but now it is only for regret and sorrow, and at the end of the opera, it is for the burial of Zijun by forgetting and burying my truth deeply. Mr. Shi Guangnan also used the same musical theme to describe the beginning and the end, which not only closely linked the lyrics, but also echoed the music. The three arias are the essence of the whole opera’s small parts, and each aria represents a state of mind. Through in-depth analysis and research of these three cantos, the author has a deeper understanding of the connotation and classics of the whole trickling part, which improves the ability of self-learning and opera singing. At the same time, due to the limited academic ability, the paper has little introduction of musical form, harmony, melody and other factors, so the analysis in this paper naturally has certain limitations and deficiencies. Hope in the future study can be more perfect their own shortcomings,

enrich their own music cultivation.

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