The Development of a *Fach* System for the Tenor Oratorio Repertoire

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The Development of a *Fach* System for the Tenor Oratorio Repertoire

Randall Criswell Ball

A Doctor of Musical Arts document submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

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DEDICATION

Soli Deo Gloria
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First of all, I would like to thank my committee for their exceptional guidance throughout this process. Each one brought unique talents and singular perspective to my degree program and the scholarship involved in this document.

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ABSTRACT

Classical singers learn about the European Fach System early in their career. By determining which Fach a voice type fits, one can then understand which operatic repertoire is suited to study and perform. It is a reliable guide, protecting singers as they grow and function in their workplace. Since oratorio roles are predominantly not included in this system, it can sometimes be challenging for singers and pedagogues to place these roles unambiguously into a Fach. Without the security of a pedagogical system or guide, singers may be miscast in oratorio productions, which can result in a less effective performance, a misunderstanding of the acoustical qualities of the voice, or vocal injury or damage.

Drawing upon the pedagogical parameters of the existing European Fach System, this Doctor of Musical Arts Document will delineate the specific Fach for solo tenor roles in standard oratorio repertoire. Specifically, this document discusses the technical aspects of the tenor voice that define its specific Fach within the general ‘tenor’ Fach, and demonstrates how the European Fach System can be applied for specific tenor Fach in operatic literature. This document extrapolates the operatic Fach system into the oratorio repertoire, including a brief overview of the evolution of the use of the tenor voice in sacred music and oratorio repertoire, with specific references to vocal range, tessitura, orchestration or orchestral accompaniment, and orchestral tuning of several representative tenor oratorio roles, including: Evangelista in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion, BWV 244 (1727), tenor role in Händel’s Messiah, HWV 56 (1742), Uriel in Haydn’s Creation, H. 21/2 (1798), Samson in G. F. Händel’s Samson, HWV 57 (1743), Jesus in
Beethoven’s *Christus am Ölberge*, Op. 85 (1803), and tenor role in Britten's *War Requiem*, Op. 66 (1962). An extensive appendix of tenor roles in the standard oratorio repertoire with suggested tenor *Fach* is provided.
INTRODUCTION

We must continually work to create a world in which all young people are recognized for their abilities, encouraged to develop them, and then appreciated when they share those gifts and talents.¹ - Simon Estes

When training young singers, a vocal pedagogue has a responsibility to choose vocal pieces that will not only fit best for a particular voice type but will also facilitate the development of the technique required of a classical singer in the twenty-first century. Failure to identify developmental criteria when choosing appropriate repertoire for young singers can be a potential source of vocal damage and even skew a career path. In his book Intelligent College Teaching, Robert Duke explains that musicians on any level “can all demonstrate their skill at very high levels of competence if the repertoire at each level permits them to do so.”² If the chosen vocal repertoire does not fit the voice type in training, it can cause a negative experience for the singer and pedagogue alike. The European Fach System of operatic vocal categorization has been researched in depth for those singing different opera roles, but those who sing roles in oratorio do not have a similar system to guide them. That can be problematic for a young developing singer, and placing these roles unambiguously into a Fach to achieve “high levels of competence”³ in performance and training of roles in oratorio repertoire can sometimes be challenging for pedagogues.

¹ Simon Estes and Mary L. Swanson. Simon Estes in His Own Voice (Cumming, IA: LMP, L.C., 1999), 129.
³ Ibid.
The two primary sources for understanding and implementing the European Fach System used by musicians globally are Rudolf Kloiber’s *Handbuch der Oper* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1973) and also Richard Boldrey’s *Guide to Operatic Roles & Arias* (Dallas, TX: Pst. Inc., 1994). Since the Kloiber *Handbuch der Oper* is written primarily in German, the Boldrey is one of the principal Fach guides for voice pedagogues and singers in English-speaking countries. There are numerous secondary sources about the European Fach System that can also be utilized to enhance one’s knowledge of the systemic implementation in opera houses and theaters all over the world. The secondary resource that seems the most thorough in its efforts is Pearl Yeadon McGinnis and Marith McGinnis Willis’ *The Opera Singer's Career Guide: Understanding the European Fach System* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2010). Having an overview of how the system works will be helpful for assigning repertoire for particular voices outside of the operatic domain.

Specifically for the tenor voice, Fächer has been classified using their Italian names by vocal pedagogue Richard Miller in his book *Training Tenor Voices* (New York: Schirmer, 1993). He lists them as Tenorino, Tenore leggiero, Tenore lirico, Tenore lirico spinto, Tenore dramatico, and Heldentenor. Each Fach has specific repertoire associated with the qualities they possess, and there are some oratorio tenor roles which could be sung by different tenor voice types. This document will concentrate on the tenor Fach: Tenore leggiero, Tenore lirico, Tenore lirico spinto, and Tenore

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4 All of the Fach listed in *Training Tenor Voices* is not listed above, but they will be further discussed in Chapter 1. Richard Miller, *Training Tenor Voices* (New York: Schirmer, 1993), 9-13.
dramatico. These four Fächer (Fach pl.) are the voice types that are most frequently utilized in oratorio repertoire. The Fächer Tenorino and Heldentenor are rare and rarely used as these categories are extraordinary and can be difficult to find in the business of singing.

Following an exploration of the current understanding of The European Fach System and the history of voice classification for the tenor voice, it is important to delineate how the tenor voice evolved in oratorio repertoire from its beginnings as a melodic line on a musical score to an actual voice type. This overview will give some insight on how composers typically wrote oratorios with certain singers in mind, and how the expectations of singers in oratorio changed through its history. Two primary sources will be used in this study of oratorio: Kurt Pahlen’s *The World of the Oratorio: Oratorio, Mass, Requiem, Te Deum, Stabat Mater, and Large Cantatas* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press., 1990) and Howard E. Smither: *A History of the Oratorio*. Smither’s research is divided into four volumes: *Volume 1 - The Oratorio in the Baroque Era Italy, Vienna, Paris* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977), *Volume 2 - The Oratorio in the Baroque Era Protestant Germany and England* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977), *Volume 3 - The Oratorio in the Classical Era*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987 and *Volume 4 - The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000). Using these sources and other secondary sources will be supportive in understanding how to assign roles to a particular Fach or voice classification.
Understanding the roots of oratorio from its origins in seventeenth-century Roman oratories, through its development in Paris, Vienna and also Protestant Germany by the end of the century, and its expansion in England and Germany into the eighteenth century is vital in the process of codifying an Oratorio Fach System. Julianne C. Baird’s translation of *Introduction to the Art of Singing* in 1995 is an invaluable resource for English speakers on how to sing in the Baroque era, as this resource was originally a 1757 German treatise by Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720-1774). The German version was adapted from Pier Francesco Tosi (c. 1653-1732) *Opinioni de’ cantori antichi e moderni* . . . (1723). *Opinioni* was the first full-length treatise on singing that was predominantly directed to the singing teacher on how to teach Baroque vocal music to students. Agricola, a pupil of J. S. Bach, provided extensive running commentary on what Tosi wrote more than thirty years before, giving insight into the culture and music of Frederick the Great (1712-1786) who was the King of Prussia 1740 until 1786 in Berlin. In an age of quality contemporary scholarship, *Introduction to the Art of Singing* is a helpful resource for the serious twenty-first-century performer who wants to accomplish historically-accurate vocal practices, procedures, and performance in Baroque vocal music.

As classical singers attempt to understand the evolution of oratorio, Martha Elliot’s *Singing in Style: A Guide to Vocal Performance Practices* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press., 2006) is an invaluable guide to the researcher as they trace the

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performance practices of different historical periods. Each chapter presents a historical period (Early Baroque, Late Baroque, Classical Era, **Bel Canto**, **Lieder**, **Mélodies**, Second Viennese School, Early Twentieth-Century Nationalism), and gives background information on the singers and composers, the vocal repertoire, and the stylistic conventions of that time. The early chapters on Baroque music also are organized by different countries since the vocal practices and repertoire were slightly different between Germany, Italy, France and England. The later chapter on Nationalism is divided between the countries of Russia, Spain, England, and the United States.

Elliott successfully covers the Baroque period to the present bringing together information from excellent primary sources such as historical treatises on music, personal accounts from composers, performers, historians, critics, and current scholarly commentary into one convenient handbook. This resource is quite useful for the vocal pedagogue, vocal student and the amateur and professional singer who strive to give historically accurate performances. Elliott presents research designed to aid performers in making informed decisions about historically accurate performance practices, and that is precisely what this study on the pedagogical application of the European **Fach** System intends to do regarding oratorio repertoire for the tenor voice. For singers to understand appropriate **Fach** of any solo repertoire, they must comprehend the vocal performance practices of the era.

In total, this document will cover six tenor oratorio roles from the **Tenore leggero**, **Tenore lirico**, **Tenore lirico spinto**, and **Tenore drammatico Fächer**. One role that is considered to be **Zwischenfachstimme** will be the Evangelista in J. S. Bach’s
Matthäus-Passion, BWV 244 (1727). Authors McGinnis and Willis define “Zwischenfachstimme,” in their book titled The Opera Singer’s Career Guide: Understanding the European Fach System as “between categories voice” types. This brief study will examine the different performance practices when A=415 Hz or A=440 Hz, and if that has an effect on vocal type when casting the role of the Evangelista. The difficulty this type of tenor may have singing lower in the range of what is written in the role of the Evangelista in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion will be discussed in Chapter 4. Since there are many oratorios in the repertoire that can exhibit a variety of performance practices, particularly in the Baroque and early Classical periods, it is important to take all of these variables into account when studying Fach within this genre.

The other tenor oratorio roles researched in Chapter 4 of this document are from Handel’s Messiah, HWV 56 (1742) from the Baroque period, and Haydn’s The Creation, H. 21/2 (1798) from the Classical period. The hypothesis of Fach for both oratorio roles will be Tenore lirico. The Tenore lirico spinto and Tenore dramatico roles researched in Chapter 5 are from Handel’s Samson, HWV 57 (1743) from the Baroque period, Beethoven’s Christus am Ölberge, Op. 85 (1803) from the early Romantic period and Benjamin Britten’s War Requiem, Op. 66 (1962) from the twentieth century.

The selected repertoire will concentrate on the Fächer above for tenor voice types, but the “Oratorio Chart” in Appendix 2 of this document is a more exhaustive list.

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of tenor roles. The chart will list all tenor Fächer and outlines: Composer, Oratorio title, Date, Tenor Role(s) therein, Range and Tessitura, General Orchestration, Optimal Venue for performance and Optimal Fach to sing the tenor role. In addition to the aforementioned sources listed in this chapter pertaining to the history of oratorio, the following sources of oratorio literature helped in establishing a canon of repertoire that was included in the appendix: Dennis Schrock’s *Choral Repertoire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), George Putnam Upton’s *The Standard Oratorios: Their Sorties, Their Music, and Their Composers* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1888), and Annie Wilson Patterson’s *The Story of Oratorio* (New York: The Walter Scott Publishing Co. Ltd., 1902).

any particular role, but there were more supplemental scores and recordings that were also examined via the internet at IMSLP and NAXOS online.


Modern-day voice teachers in higher education have a responsibility to help choose vocal repertoire in all genres that will facilitate the development of the technique required of a classical singer. The developing classical singers learn about the European
Fach System early in their careers, but often the oratorio repertoire is omitted. Since roles within oratorio lie outside of the operatic repertoire, determining how to place these roles into an unambiguous vocal Fach is important.

As a model for pedagogues and young singers, this document will demonstrate a systematic method to determine Fach for tenor oratorio roles by: explaining the European Fach System and how it relates to each oratorio tenor role, clarifying the evolution of the tenor voice in sacred music and providing a brief overview of oratorio history as it pertains to this voice type, proposing an Oratorio Fach System for delineating prospective Fach for tenor roles in oratorio repertoire. The tenor Fächer researched for this study will be Tenore leggiero, Tenore lirico, Tenore lirico spinto and Tenore dramatico. Each Fach has specific repertoire associated with the qualities they possess. Providing research and presenting data by utilizing the suggested Oratorio Fach System, and studying six tenor roles in standard oratorio repertoire, facilitates the assignment of probable Fach to tenor oratorio roles. When considering these tenor oratorio roles, reviewing several recordings for each work focusing on the performance history of singers therein, and study specific passages with technical and dramatic strategies appropriate for each role will facilitate future research. This model of researching roles in the oratorio repertoire can act as a guide to determining which Fach a role might fall into, and facilitate preparation for accurate historical performance.
CHAPTER 1. DELINEATING THE TENOR FÄCHER: EUROPEAN FACH SYSTEM, BEL CANTO TECHNIQUE AND VOCAL ACOUSTICS

Singing is not about timbres or category labels; singing is about fascinating acoustical properties like the colors of the human voice which derive from thought and emotion.7
- Thomas Hampson

As Hampson candidly states in this interview from 1991, many in the field of music have become obsessed with labels, but these systems have been put in place to protect and guide young singers and inform them about tradition and expectations. German opera houses developed the Fach System near the end of the 19th century, and Dan Merek explains in his book titled Singing: The First Art that “the German love of order has engendered a system of vocal classification called the Fach System.”8 From the fifteenth century the primary categories for voice classification, in some of the earliest polyphonic compositions, were: soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, additional categories were established: baritone, mezzo-soprano, and bass-baritone. A further subcategorization is what ultimately led to what is now known as The European Fach System for operatic repertoire.

The Italian School has produced some of the most famous singers of all time, and Daniela Bloem-Hubatka describes them as having voices that:

Come across clear and brilliant, their intonation pure, their phrasing musical, artful and elegant, their pronunciation clear, their interpretation true to the composers’ intentions, their feelings and emotions strike us as genuine, coming straight from the heart.9

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It was this style of a “natural voice” singing technique, called bel canto or “beautiful singing” in Italian that took the world by storm in the 18th and early 19th century. The most famous vocal pedagogues that are directly associated with this movement are: Manuel García II (1805–1906), author of the treatise *Traité complet de l’art du chant* (1872); Francesco Lamperti (1813-92), author of *L’arte del canto* (1871), and his son Giovanni Battista Lamperti (1839-1910), author of *The technics of bel canto* (1905).

Many pedagogues have written about the bel canto style of singing, but it was Richard Miller who became a vocal pedagogue pioneer in the twentieth century as he established this method of singing in America. It is widely assumed that “bel canto is just a way to sing repertoire; the Old Italian School of Singing is the method to be able to sing all repertoire.” Miller very successfully gleaned from the old Italian masters vocal technique which is now studied and practiced in vocal pedagogy and technique all over the world in the 21st century. Much of the terminology used in this chapter about vocal pedagogy and acoustics is derived from the bel canto style of singing.

**An Overview of the European Fach System**

To better understand how to pick appropriate repertoire for a particular voice type, one can educate what characteristics define the European Fach System for their type. In *The Opera Singer's Career Guide: Understanding the European Fach System*,


10 Ibid.
authors Pearl McGinnis and Marith Willis explain that “Fach in German means specialty or category . . . In the opera world . . . [it] also refers to a voice type or vocal category.”

Many different variables are taken into account when distinguishing between the twenty-five different Fach categories within this system of every voice type. As McGinnis and Willis explain, Fach is defined by voice, range, timbre, physical build, age and experience, desire, and frequency of performance. While it can be helpful to take each of these variables into consideration when determining Fach for operatic repertoire, all are not as important when casting oratorio. Most of the characteristics listed relate specifically to vocal quality, but physical build would be the least important when casting roles in oratorio because there is typically no action on stage or costumes. It is important at this point to mention that age and experience along with desire are equally as important as vocal quality when casting tenor roles in oratorio repertoire. Intellect, experience with each composition, and understanding the performance history therein are paramount when assessing the appropriate Fach for each role. McGinnis and Willis later clarify that “being familiar with these attributes that constitute each Fach category is an effective guide for training young voices.”

The Fach System is very helpful to young professional singers trying to find their niche in a vast world of opera, but it is also a system that is quite helpful to the

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12 Ibid., 9.

13 Ibid., 47.
administration in opera houses as well. McGinnis and Willis clarify that “European opera companies use the *Fach* system to form companies and cast opera… [it] is used to hire and fire singers, organize the season, ensure that there are enough ensemble singers to cover the roles, and even to balance the budget.”\(^\text{14}\) Without these guidelines laid out in the European *Fach* System, singers could be asked to sing roles that lie outside their established *Fach*. Likewise, a singer could market themselves as a particular *Fach*, but when it comes to “show time” in the theater, they may not be able to perform optimally. In this case, the singer would be in breach of contract and would have to be replaced by the opera company. There would be a loss of funds, but more importantly, that singer may find it difficult receiving another job with that company again.

**Rudolf Kloiber’s *Handbuch der Oper* (1973)**

While discussing the history of the *Fach* System, one would be remiss not to mention Rudolf Kloiber (1899-1973). His *Handbuch der Oper* (1973) is a very useful resource for singers, theaters, and pedagogues that facilitated what we now understand as the European *Fach* System. *Handbuch der Oper* was first published in 1951, and over the years it has been updated and revised. The most recent edition was published in 2016, with updated information by Wulf Konold and Robert Maschka, well-known musicologists. *Handbuch* is a list of operas performed in the German-speaking opera houses and theaters. It lists every role, the *Fach* or *Fächer* appropriate to sing the role,

and whether the role is a *kleine, mitte*, or *grosse Partie* (small, medium, or large part).\footnote{Rudolf Kloiber, *Handbuch der Oper: Band 1 Adam - Prokofjew* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1973), 9.} The size of the role is important to note since the level of stamina is a factor in measuring the ability of each singer. For each composer, he notes their birth and death dates as well as a timeline of special dates that were of significance during their lives. Kloiber also provides detailed information about the work, including historical background, the size of the chorus, orchestration, synopsis, some stylistic attributes, and possible length of the performance. One challenge is that most editions of *Handbuch* are published only in German. Another challenge is that they include not only a small portion of operetta works and very few dramatic oratorios but also no musicals nor other concert works. There are editions that are newer and also editions that were translated into English, but as mentioned, they do not seem as exhaustive as the 1973 edition – perhaps since that was the year Kloiber died. Works composed after 1973 are obviously not included in this edition, but since this document does not focus on operatic repertoire, this is not a major concern.

Kloiber’s exhaustive text, which has had many editions since its conception, is one of the most important sources one can study when applying the European *Fach* System to tenor solo oratorio repertoire. A comparison of orchestration and *Fach* for operas that parallel oratorios from the same time of composition, or even composers of both genres, will be necessary and beneficial information. For example, Kloiber considers the role of Ecclitico in the opera *Die Welt auf dem Monde* by Franz Joseph
Haydn, to be a *Tenore lirico* with a *große Solopartie*. One might expect that the role of Uriel in Haydn’s *The Creation* would be associated with the same *Fach* to that in his opera. Some distinctions need to be clarified where Kloiber does list a dramatic oratorio as an entry. In most cases, he lists every tenor as a *Tenore lirico* without any distinction other than the length of the role. For example, in Carl Orff’s trilogy of dramatic oratorios (*Carmina Burana, Catulli Carmina, and Trionfo di Afrodite*), there are principal tenor roles in each work, but Kloiber decides to list all three roles as appropriate for the *Tenore lirico Fach*. While there may be some validity to this assessment, tradition has shown that these roles are fundamentally different from each other. Further divisions would help in clarification beyond just listing the roles as a large or small role. It is clear that more study on the extrapolation of the European *Fach* System to classify specific voice types for solo oratorio repertoire is needed, just as Kloiber’s study was significant to opera repertoire in the 1950’s.

**Richard Miller’s *Training Tenor Voices* (1993)**

Vocal pedagogy pioneer, Richard Miller, explicates a clear understanding of *Fach* with the tenor voice in mind. In his book, *Training Tenor Voices*, Miller focuses on vocal registration in determining one’s vocal category. He divides the tenor *Fach* into several different groupings: *Tenorino, Tenore leggero, Spieltenor, Tenore buffo*,
“Operetta tenor,” Tenore lirico, Tenore lirico spinto, Tenore dramatico, and Heldentenor.¹⁸ This document will concentrate on the four tenor Fächer from Tenore leggiero - lighter in quality – through Tenore lirico and Tenore lirico spinto to the Tenore dramatico - heavier in quality. These four Fächer are the voice types most frequently used in the oratorio repertoire. While the other five types might be used in performances of Baroque, Classical, and Romantic period oratorios, their vocal quality, vocal registration, and traditions often play a factor in excluding particular voice types from being cast in oratorio roles.

To better understand the inherent characteristics of the Tenore leggiero, Tenore lirico, Tenore lirico spinto, and Tenore dramatico Fächer, a brief discussion of some specific vocal pedagogy for the male voice could be helpful. While the terms to be discussed are recognized by many vocal pedagogues, the explanation of this international vocal terminology is credited to Richard Miller and is derived from his book, Training Tenor Voices. Vocal classification is often determined in the male voice by discovering that singer’s passaggi – or registration events.¹⁹ The three key registration events defined in Miller’s book are Primo passaggio, Secondo passaggio, and Zona di passaggio.

Familiarity with these terms is beneficial to understanding the details of this document as we discuss the above Fach categories, looking at certain passages in tenor

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¹⁹ Passaggio (pl. passaggi): Vocal register pivotal point. Miller, Training Tenor Voices, 158.
oratorio repertoire, and also when reviewing the singers from several recordings. Miller defines these terms in a concise way:

At certain points in the [ascending] scale of each singer, changes in vocal timbre become perceptible . . . muscle activity occurs at pivotal register points described as ‘breaks,’ ‘lifts,’ or passaggi . . . the first pivotal point is the primo passaggio . . . the second pivotal point, approximately a fourth above the primo passaggio, is the secondo passaggio . . . the area between the two pivotal points is known as the zona di passaggio (passage zone). . . the zona di passaggio must be skillfully negotiated if there is to be no ‘break’ when the ‘head’ register becomes prominent.20

This brief description facilitates clarification on the differences between the established Fach appropriate for tenor roles in oratorio repertoire. Miller’s passaggi assignments for each tenor voice show a direct relationship to Fach delineation in his research and are reflected accordingly at their pivotal points individually. Looking ahead in this document, each tenor Fach will be further extrapolated with these passaggi in mind as we are assigning tenor oratorio roles to a particular Fach (see Table 1.1). Using Richard Miller’s terminology, it is important to comprehend each of the passaggi or “pivotal register points” in the tenor voice for definitive clarification when delineating Fach. As Miller explains, there are three crucial passaggi in the discussion of vocal pedagogy for the male voice: Primo passaggio, Zona di passaggio, Secondo passaggio.

The first, called primo passaggio, is naturally where the singer’s “breath energy needs to increase beyond that appropriate to normal speech.”21 The range of the voice is

20 Richard Miller, Training Tenor Voices, 2-3.

ascending from a lower and more comfortable ‘speaking’ register to a higher and extended ‘calling’ register.

Table 1.1. Richard Miller’s Approximate Passaggi (register pivotal points) of Tenor Fächer.22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenor Fach</th>
<th>Primo passaggio</th>
<th>Secondo passaggio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenorino</td>
<td>E₄</td>
<td>A₄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore leggiero</td>
<td>E₄ᵇ</td>
<td>A₄ᵇ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spieltenor</td>
<td>D₄</td>
<td>G₄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore buffo</td>
<td>D₄</td>
<td>G₄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
<td>D₄</td>
<td>G₄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
<td>C₄ᶜ</td>
<td>F₄ᶜ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore drammatico</td>
<td>C₄</td>
<td>F₄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heldentenor</td>
<td>B₄ᵇ</td>
<td>E₄ᵇ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A tenor’s *primo passaggio* can be perceived as low as B₄ᵇ, or as high as E₄. To avoid the undesirable production of the ‘call’ at this juncture in the range, classically trained singers slightly modify the vowels (*aggiustamento*) in this *zona di passaggio* - “passage zone” - between the *primo passaggio* and the *secondo passaggio*.23 This slight vowel adjustment gives a sense of tonal confidence, keeps the voice in tune, and most importantly, helps to maintain the natural vocal tract length as the singer ascends to a

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23 *Aggiustamento*: Vowel modification in singing; a method for achieving an even scale throughout the registers of the singing voice, associated with the historic Italian school. Miller, *Training Tenor Voices*, 155.
higher register of the voice. Miller explains that “this ‘passage zone’ covers the approximate scale segment of a fourth” and is called the *zona di passaggio*.

*Secondo passaggio* is the point at which the strategy used in the *zona di passaggio* stops being effective, and has historically been referred to in vocal pedagogy as the ‘break’ or the ‘flip’ in the tenor voice. A tenor’s *secondo passaggio* can be perceived as low as E♭₄, or as high as A₄. Miller explains that for the pitches which lie above the *secondo passaggio*, “further increases of breath energy and vocal-fold elongation are required,” and it is most important for the tenor voice to find a “stabilized laryngeal position . . . as he approaches his *secondo passaggio*.”

There is a strong acoustical effect that takes place at the *secondo passaggio*, and the challenge for the young classically trained male singer is to accept this pivotal register point as an acoustical sensation rather than a physical one.

The desired effect for singing above the *secondo passaggio* is known as “male operatic head voice” or *voce piena in testa* - literally ‘full voice in head.’ Miller explains that young singers have a hard time accepting this point for what it is, and end up shortening their vocal tracts by elevating their larynx above the “two strong sternocleidomastoid muscles” as they have not yet “learned to coordinate vocal-fold resistance with breath energy.”

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25 Ibid., 29 and 159.


established that singers strive to achieve *voce chiusa* or “closed voice” when singing. Miller describes *voce chiusa* as a “balanced vocal timbre, avoiding *voce aperta*,” and he explains that *voce aperta* as “unskilled singing, lacking in proper resonance balance.” Along with these ideas from the Italian School of Singing of keeping the voice balanced and “closed,” the technique of cover or *copertura* is one that singers need to practice.

Miller describes *copertura* as “gradual acoustic adjustments brought about through modifying vowels in the ascending scale . . . avoiding heavy laryngeal adjustment;” he continues to explain that “*copertura* is especially necessary for the tenor voice because much demanding singing lies in the *zona di passaggio* and above the *secondo passaggio*. Implementing these strategies of vowel modification (*aggiustamento* and *copertura*) as one ascends through singer’s individual passaggi, helps them achieve what is known as *chiaroscuro*. When using these vowel modification techniques, it is important to understand that Miller encourages the singer to find a neutral or “nearest more open neighbor” when modifying. That vowel modification will have slight variations for each individual singer, as each voice and vocal tract is unique in size and shape.

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28 *Voce aperta*: Has often been classified as being a part of the French School of Singing. Richard Miller, *Training Tenor Voices*, 160.


30 *Chiaroscuro* tone: The “light-dark” timber that characterizes well-balanced resonance in the singing voice. Ibid., 155. To be further discussed in the section below titled “An Introduction to Acoustics as it pertains to the Tenor Voice”.

31 Miller provides a vowel modification chart in *Training Tenor Voices*. Ibid., 41. The neutral vowel [ʌ] and [ə] are the central point for all vowel modifications. When pitch ascends through the *zona di passaggio*, vowels modify toward the nearest more open neighbor as it applies to individual circumstances.
Understanding and practicing these techniques which derive from the Italian School of Singing are crucial for the young tenor in their development. Best practices encourage tenors to learn about these passaggi in relation to their instruments and train their muscles used for singing to respond appropriately if they are to achieve voce completa or "complete voice" throughout their vocal range. When this is not yet successfully achieved, delineating probable Fach for any singer can be a challenge. Looking ahead, each tenor Fach will be further clarified with these passaggi in mind as we assign tenor oratorio roles to a particular Fach (Table 1.1).

The aforementioned Tenore leggiero and Tenore lirico are the most appropriate Fächer to be selected in tenor oratorio repertoire from the Baroque and Classical music periods, because of their inherently lighter timbre and higher placement of their vocal registration events - passaggi. According to Miller, the Tenore leggiero "voice is of sufficient size and quality to be considered a viable professional instrument . . . his passaggi points are most likely at E₅ and A₅, and he does not often times sing easily in the lower range."32 The Tenore lirico is described as "the 'ideal' tenor for much of the standard operatic literature . . . his passaggi points typically occur at D₄ and G₄ . . . [with] the ability to sustain a high tessitura and to negotiate the upper range with beauty and vigor."33 Miller also makes mention that the oratorio literature is quite appropriate for the Tenore lirico, but as will be discussed, this is not the case for every role in tenor

32 Miller, Training Tenor Voices, 9-10.
33 Ibid.
oratorio repertoire. While each of these voice categories have specific strengths and limitations when matched to tenor roles in oratorio repertoire, these two types of tenors are considered the most appropriate to serve Baroque and Classical music in a performance setting today due to both tradition and technical practicality.

The roles discussed in this document from the Baroque period that relate directly to the Tenore leggiero and Tenore lirico Fächer are the Evangelista in J. S. Bach’s Matthäus-Passion, BWV 244 (1727), and the tenor role from Händel’s Messiah, HWV 56 (1742). The tenor role of Uriel in Haydn’s Creation, H. 21/2 (1798) is from the Classical period. While there are many similarities in musical style and period to this repertoire, there are some challenges to each tenor role specifically. These challenges will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

The Tenore lirico spinto and the Tenore dramatico have many similarities to the Tenore lirico, but understanding the key differences between the two is paramount when training a young tenor with a sizable instrument. The title of spinto comes from the Italian word spingere, which means “to push” or “to press.” Richard Miller uses the term “to thrust” the voice a little louder than what a Tenore lirico voice would be able to do naturally. Even heavier than the spinto is the Tenore dramatico. Miller describes him as “the heaviest of all non-Wagnerian tenors . . . he is frequently a large person of compact build, and although he may be tall, he usually is short-necked and barrel-

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34 Richard Miller, Training Tenor Voices, 12.
chest." The challenge collegiate vocal pedagogues face is that few *Tenore lirico spinto* or *Tenore dramatico* types exist at a college age, so being perceptive and guiding a larger tenor voice to the right repertoire is just as important as teaching them vocal technique. Miller makes a similar statement saying that the “differences [between the three voice types] depend on vocal weight and the response of a particular tenor to specific [repertoire] . . . his *passaggi* points tend to fall at C♯₄ and F♯₄” for the *Tenore lirico spinto* and C₄ and F₄ for the *Tenore dramatico*. These *passaggi* points are a half step lower for *spinto* and a whole step lower for *dramatico* than that of the *Tenore lirico* with passaggi points of D₄ and G₄. Figuring out the transition from one vocal register pivotal point to the next, in any particular voice, will help to clarify which repertoire to assign the singer.

Sharon Stohrer gives helpful advice for the developing young singer in her book entitled *The Singer’s Companion*, saying that “it is always a good rule of thumb to stay on the lighter side of things especially until you have reached vocal maturity, which can be anywhere from your mid-twenties . . . to forty-five!” Stohrer in this statement gives particularly good advice to the young and enthusiastic *Tenore lirico spinto* or *Tenore dramatico*. Young singers have a tendency to attempt repertoire that is too heavy for their voice or too soon for their level of vocal maturity. As professional and educated

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36 Ibid.

vocal pedagogues, we have the responsibility of guiding young singers to sing appropriate repertoire, even in oratorio.

The roles discussed in this document which directly relate to the *Tenore lirico spinto* and the *Tenore drmatico Fächer* are from Handel’s *Samson*, HWV 57 (1743) from the Baroque period, Beethoven’s *Christus am Ölberge*, Op. 85 (1803) from the Classical period and Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem*, Op. 66 (1962) from the 20th Century. While quite different in musical style, period, and language, these three roles are best sung by a more robust tenor voice like the *Tenore lirico spinto* and *Tenore drmatico*. These roles and the challenges therein will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

**An Introduction to Acoustics as It Pertains to the Tenor Voice**

In the last quarter century, extensive and scientific research has been done on the production of the voice in speech and singing. There have been many scholarly written articles and books on the subject of vocal acoustics, as it pertains to formants and harmonics; two of the leading researchers in this field in the early part of the twenty-first century are Scott McCoy and also Donald Gray Miller. There is much to be gleaned from a thorough understanding of acoustics in the singing voice, but for this document, the focus will be predominantly on how the length and size of the vocal tract in a singer’s voice can help in *Fach* delineation after one understands a few basics.

Every voice has a precise length from the vocal folds, where phonation occurs, to the lips where the sound is transferred into the room. This space is known as the vocal tract and is where the resonance of the voice is produced. David Howard and Jamie
Angus, from their book titled *Acoustics and Psychoacoustics*, explain that “the vocal tract can be considered as a stopped tube (closed at the larynx, which operates as a flow-controlled reed, and open at the lips) which is approximately 17.5 cm in length for an adult male.”\(^{38}\) Donald Miller explains the vocal tract as “the air space, together with the walls that contain it, between the vocal folds in the larynx and the opening of the lips.”\(^{39}\) With these specific parameters of the vocal tract explained, it is easy to understand that the voice is considered an open-closed tube or a *quarter-wave resonator*. Scott McCoy explains that “a formant is a resonance of the vocal tract . . . [the formant’s] amplification potential is idle until the vocal folds begin to vibrate . . . the vocal tract has many formants, which are generally labeled F1, F2, F3, etc.”\(^{40}\) The formants are created when the frequency of the sound is such that it bounces back from the opening at the lips creating a standing wave. McCoy further explains that “the first two [formants], F1 and F2, are required for accurate vowel production,” and the formula for calculating these formants (F) in a *quarter-wave resonator* such as the voice is: \(F_n = (2n-1) \left(\frac{c}{4L}\right)\).\(^{41}\) It is important to note that \(n\) is the formant number, \(c\) is the speed of sound, and \(L\) is the length of the vocal tract in centimeters (cm). Since every singer has a slightly different length of


\(^{41}\) Ibid, 41.
their vocal tract, the value of \( L \) in the formula above changes. Therefore, the naturally occurring neutral vocal tract formants in each singer differ slightly in frequency.

For a male singer who has a neutral vocal tract length of 17.5 cm, given that the speed of sound is 350 m/sec, the calculations are as follows:

\[
F_1 = (2 (1) - 1) \left( \frac{350 \text{ m/sec}}{4 (17.5 \text{ cm})} \right)
\]

\[
F_1 = (2-1)35000 \text{ cm/sec} / 4 (17.5 \text{ cm})
\]

\[
F_1 = (1) \frac{35000}{70}
\]

\[
F_1 = 500 \text{ Hz}
\]

Thus, the first formant in his neutral vocal tract position occurs at 500 Hz.

\[
F_2 = (2 (2) - 1) \left( \frac{350 \text{ m/sec}}{4 (17.5 \text{ cm})} \right)
\]

\[
F_2 = (4-1) 35000 \text{ cm/sec} / 4 (17.5 \text{ cm})
\]

\[
F_2 = (3) \frac{35000}{70}
\]

\[
F_2 = 1500 \text{ Hz}
\]

If continued these calculations \( F_3 = 2500 \text{ Hz} \), and \( F_4 = 3500 \text{ Hz} \), and so forth. These calculations are for a ‘neutral’ vocal tract. Scott McCoy explains, “formant frequencies are altered through changes in the shape of the vocal tract, including altering the position of the tongue, opening or closing the jaw, rounding or spreading the lips, and raising or lowering the larynx.”\(^{42}\) What singers do to produce what are perceived as ‘vowels’ is to formulate the shape of their vocal tract using the variable positions of their tongue, lips and mouth opening to play with the frequencies by increasing or decreasing the sizes of \( F_1 \) and \( F_2 \) (Figure 1.1). The neutral vocal tract of \( F_1 \) to 500 Hz and \( F_2 \) to 1500 Hz

\(^{42}\) Scott McCoy, *Your Voice: An Inside View*, 41.
mentioned above would produce the vowel [ə], whereas if the singer changes F₁ to 300 Hz and F₂ to 2100 Hz (tongue moves forward in the mouth) the vowel [i] results. Likewise, changing F₁ to 800 Hz and F₂ to 1200 Hz (tongue moves to the back of the mouth) the vowel [ɑ] results, etc.

Figure 1.1. Simplified model of the vocal tract, highlighting F₁ and F₂.⁴³

In the figure below, Miller illustrates all the possible vowel results when changing the shape of the vocal tube when singing or speaking, by adjusting the articulators in the voice, which also, in turn, changes the frequencies of each formant. (Figure 1.2).

⁴³ Donald Gray Miller, Resonance in Singing, 29.
Harmonics in the vocal sound play an important part in singing, and a strong coupling of a formant to a harmonic throughout the singer’s range is the desired effect in classically trained singing.\textsuperscript{44}

Figure 1.2. The general areas occupied by ten vowels in the space that plots F\textsubscript{1} and F\textsubscript{2}.

Male singers ascending the scale, past \textit{primo passaggio} into the \textit{zona di passaggio}, will gradually open their mouth so that they can attempt to couple the first formant (F\textsubscript{1}) with the second harmonic (H\textsubscript{2}) in the sound. This gradual process of opening the jaw from the hinge joint, and playing with the vowels in the \textit{zona} to find vowels which produce this

\textsuperscript{44} Harmonic: One of the frequency components of a periodic sound, including H\textsubscript{1}, the fundamental frequency (note F\textsubscript{0} = H\textsubscript{1}), and the whole-number multiplies H\textsubscript{1}: H\textsubscript{2}, H\textsubscript{3}, H\textsubscript{4}, etc. Ibid., 115.

\textsuperscript{45} Donald Gray Miller, \textit{Resonance in Singing}, 26.
strong coupling, helps to maintain the “light-dark” or *chiaroscuro* balance of the sound increasing the space inside F₁ of the vocal tract. When a formant lines up with a harmonic, it boosts that harmonic. For example, the above result of the vowel [i] is F₁ to 300 Hz and F₂ to 2100 Hz, so it boosts the harmonic in the basic sound coming from the vocal folds which occurs at 300 Hz. The figure below shows us the harmonic series, and that frequency of 300 Hz is around D₄ on the scale (Figure 1.3).

![Figure 1.3. Pitches of the first ten harmonics of a tone with F0 of 100 Hz.](image)

As the singer ascends the scale, his gradual opening of the mouth and the tuning of the first formant to the second harmonic helps to manage a transition through the *zona di passaggio*. When the singer reaches *secolo passaggio* the coupling of the first formant and second harmonic is no longer successful, then “Second Formant Tuning” would prove to be a better strategy at that moment where the voice wants to “flip.”

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“Second Formant Tuning” is an acoustical strategy for the classically trained male singer trying to achieve *voce piena in testa* at and above the *secondo passaggio*. In this strategy, the singer is to drop the strong relationship between F₁ and H₂ established in the *zona di passaggio* and to favor a new stronger coupling between F₂ and H₃ or H₄. Since singing in the *secondo passaggio* is an acoustical event and not a physical event, singers then withdraw from trying to boost the second harmonic by the first formant and adjust to a boosting of the third or fourth harmonic by the second formant. Below gives the approximate range and harmonic series for each tenor voice, showing where each *Fach* can attempt to utilize formant tuning throughout their vocal range (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Approximate ranges for acoustical events in tenor *Fächer* in relation to formant tuning and *passaggi*.⁴⁹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenor Fach Classification</th>
<th>Probable Range</th>
<th>Speaking Range</th>
<th>F1-H2 Coupling</th>
<th>F2-H3/H4 Coupling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenorino</td>
<td>E₃ – E₅</td>
<td>E₃ – E₅ᵇ</td>
<td>E₄ – A₄</td>
<td>A₄ – E₅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore leggiero</td>
<td>E₅ᵇ – E₇ᵇ</td>
<td>E₅ᵇ – D₄</td>
<td>E₅ᵇ – A₅ᵇ</td>
<td>A₅ᵇ – E₅ᵇ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
<td>D₃ – D₅</td>
<td>D₃ – C₅ᵇ</td>
<td>D₄ – G₄</td>
<td>G₄ – D₅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
<td>C₈ᵇ – C₉ᵇ</td>
<td>C₈ᵇ – C₄</td>
<td>C₉ᵇ – F₉ᵇ</td>
<td>F₉ᵇ – C₉ᵇ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenore drammatico</td>
<td>C₃ – C₅</td>
<td>C₃ – B₃</td>
<td>C₄ – F₄</td>
<td>F₄ – C₅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heldentenor</td>
<td>B₄ᵇ₂ – B₄ᵇ₄</td>
<td>B₄ᵇ₂ – A₃</td>
<td>B₅ᵇ₃ – E₄ᵇ₄</td>
<td>E₅ᵇ₄ – B₅ᵇ₄</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴⁷ Formant Tuning: In the context of the singing voice, formant tuning refers to adjusting in the frequencies of the first two formants (=vowel modification) to arrive at an optimal resonance configuration for a given F₀ and vowel combination. Donald Gray Miller, *Resonance in Singing*, 114.

⁴⁸ Donald Gray Miller, *Resonance in Singing*, 4-5.

⁴⁹ Acoustical events in the range of tenor voices occur differently depending on *Fach*, and the two octave range is approximate for each *Fach*. The combination of the last note of the *primo passaggio* and the first of the *secondo passaggio* are also an approximate overlapping to accommodate all *passaggi* possibilities within tenor *Fächer*.
With the addition of increased breath pressure, the singer would slightly modify the desired vowel toward a neighboring vowel in the spectrum (Table 1.2). This approach is helpful in the transition through the *secondo passaggio*, and also aids avoiding either a *voce aperta* (open) or *deckung* sound.\(^{50}\) Utilizing the aforementioned techniques of *aggiustamento*, *copertura*, and *voce chiusa* help in this adjustment to create tonal balance and security in this area of the voice. To achieve this *passaggi* transition into *secondo passaggio*, many singers crest their tongues forward and up to raise the frequency in their second formant to produce *voce piena in testa* or “male operatic head voice” in their singing. This technique of professional singing is characterized acoustically by the strong relationship between \(F_2\) and \(H_3\) or \(H_4\), and this strong coupling gives a sense of tonal confidence, keeping the voice in tune, and maintaining its natural vocal tract length. The famous tenor Luciano Pavarotti is deemed by Donald Miller to have been the “King of Second Formant Tuning,” because he was a master at achieving what is understood as formant tracking.\(^{51}\) When classically trained male singers are managing this relationship correctly, this area of the voice has a sense of simple directness, ease in the throat, tonal security and aerodynamic efficiency.

It is important to understand that the *passaggi* points for each of the tenor *Fächer* can change with different vocal tract lengths. A shorter tract would result in a lighter,

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\(^{50}\) *Deckung*: Early and heavy “covering” as practiced in typically Germanic and Nordic techniques of singing. Miller, *Training Tenor Voices*, 156.

\(^{51}\) *Formant Tracking*: When a formant, tuned to a harmonic, follows the same harmonic to a different frequency as the voice changes pitch. Donald Gray Miller, *Resonance in Singing*, 1 and 114.
brighter and higher Fach; a longer tract would result in a heavier, darker and lower Fach (Table 1.1). Many young singers have a hard time accepting that the transition through their passaggi is an acoustical phenomenon and not physical. They end up shortening the naturally-occurring length of their vocal tract to accommodate the difference, so the $L$ from the formula above (length of the vocal tract in $cm$) becomes shorter thus changing the whole formant structure. This shortening makes it difficult to find necessary couplings with the proper formants and harmonics when trying to execute chiaroscuro throughout the entire range of the instrument. Understanding this information is crucial in the discussion of passaggi because the passaggi in singers of marginally different naturally occurring vocal tract lengths will also be slightly different. Thus changing the formant structure for each Fach (Table 1.2).

Considering the complicated acoustical activities which must be undertaken to rectify the naturally-occurring acoustical phenomena through the passaggi of the classically trained tenor, it is easier to understand that the relationship between where these passaggi occur in a specific voice and the range and tessitura of a given oratorio role is important to be aware of in Fach delineation. For example, if we see that a Tenore lirico has a secondo passaggio of $G_4$, and the range and tessitura of any given oratorio role rarely goes above $G_4$, so it might be safe to assume that the role in question is more than likely fine for his instrument. Only factoring in the variables from above, challenges can arise when not researching further the details of each oratorio. In this example, the size of the orchestra is larger, so the role requires him to sing repeatedly with higher
decibels (dB) on that G₄ to project over the sound of the orchestra. The more often the Tenore lirico has to sing in this arrangement for a specific role, he is going to feel continually challenged, and the more taxing and unrealistic the role will be for him to sing with good *chiaroscuro* singing. However, if this same role was sung by a Tenore lirico spinto or Tenore drammatico, who has a *secondo passaggio* as much as a minor third lower, the note G₄ is nicely flipped over into *voce piena in testa*, and he will feel much more at ease with much easier projecting power on the same pitch. Since the heavier voice types have a slightly longer vocal tract, the role is, therefore, more likely to be well suited for them opposed to the Tenore lirico.

To better understand how to pick appropriate repertoire outside of the opera sphere for a particular voice type, one must understand what characteristics comprise the European *Fach* System for casting roles in opera. For oratorio and other concert works, there is no specific *Fach* System published to help when casting the solo voices in these other musical genres. In many circumstances, vocal music is designated for a type of voice in the title of a composition (i.e. Benjamin Britten’s *The Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*, Op. 31). Similarly, a voice type is often indicated in a score simply because of the range of notes assigned it by the composer. Since the *Fach* System is still a relatively modern concept, it is rare to see any particular role in oratorio or on the concert stage assigned a *Fach* by the composer or to find explanations in the composer’s notes. Until a bit more research is done on any individual work, it is hard to know precisely

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52 Decibel: A unit used for measuring relative sound pressure level (SPL), or physical intensity. Donald Gray Miller, *Resonance in Singing*, 113.
what kind of voice would truly be appropriate for a role written for a soloist in a composition outside of opera.

Referencing sources written by authors, voice pedagogues and scholars concerning voice classification and also the European *Fach* System is a helpful place to start when trying to understand the different *Fach* which exist and how they compare to all repertoire written for classically trained singers. Authors McGinnis and Willis thoroughly examine what the *Fach* system is and how and why each voice category fits within the system. Kloiber’s book has been considered the “Opera Bible” by many in the business, as it delineates many roles in the opera sphere assigning a *Fach* to each role. For the tenor *Fach* in particular, Miller’s book provides clarity as to how each tenor *Fach* varies specifically in type and explains how each tenor best functions in a performance setting for different genres.

So that one can fully understand how to select repertoire for a particular voice type outside of opera, it can be helpful to know how roles in opera are categorized, and then match the criteria for both genres and delineating *Fach* for the roles in oratorio. Specifically, the *Tenore leggiero, Tenore lirico, Tenore lirico spinto*, and the *Tenore dramatico Fächer* are the voice types which are most frequently utilized in oratorio repertoire. The following chapters will examine opera roles listed in the above resources to generate guidelines by which tenor oratorio roles may be designated.
CHAPTER 2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE TENOR VOICE AS IT PERTAINS TO ORATORIO HISTORY

The typical professional tenor is a singer who, like Tamino, has undergone a series of trials; he succeeds against a number of predetermined unexplained odds, including vocal pedagogies that remain silent about the special nature of the tenor singing instrument. The tenor is often successful because, all theatre folklore to the contrary, he usually possesses a solid native intelligence and an indestructible psyche.53

- Richard Miller

Having an understanding of how the art of singing, specifically for the tenor voice, evolved all the way through music history of the oratorio will be essential when assigning a Fach classification to specific roles in the repertoire. Orchestrations expanded from a few instruments or a small group of players in the Renaissance and Baroque eras to a smaller chamber-like orchestra in the Classical era to a full symphony orchestra in the Romantic era and beyond. Oratorio evolved and spread throughout all of Europe over a two-hundred-year period. The art of singing and the techniques used therein evolved as the demands of different genre types of vocal repertoire progressed.

When trying to describe the tenor voice or even isolate the beginnings of its inception, John Potter does well to describe the difficulty behind such a task in his book titled Tenor: History of a Voice by saying:

The modern tenor voice is the product of many centuries of evolution: a process that slowly in the early medieval period with voices that might have sung in a tenor range, and accelerated rapidly from the eighteenth century onwards to become the complex voice of today’s opera houses and concert halls. The categorisation of voice types came relatively late in this time frame, leaving us to speculate on what sort of voice preceded the tenor and formed the seed bed for the phenomenon of the twenty-first century.54


Potter continues to explain that the possible antecedents of the tenor voice seem to have a long history that traces back to the twelfth century, where an oral and aural singing tradition was utilized before information and music was written down.\textsuperscript{55} Scholars have traced roots for the tenor voice back to the twelfth-century singer and composer Léonin who is considered by Potter as “one of the least known figures in the history of Western music, yet has come to be considered one of the most important.”\textsuperscript{56} He and other church composers started to write music down on paper; Potter states that “this is the first time we encounter the word ‘tenor’ to refer to a particular vocal line . . . it comes from the Latin \textit{tenere} meaning ‘to hold.’”\textsuperscript{57} The Latin term was written to signify a particular vocal line in these early compositions to signify holding the pitch, and this is probably why the term \textit{tenorista} was applied to those talented singers who had the ability “to hold” or sustain the voice part that holds the plainchant.

\textbf{The Development of the Tenor Voice in Early Sacred Music}

In the Medieval and Renaissance periods, the highly skilled \textit{tenorista} and the \textit{machicotus} sang in the \textit{cantus firmus} also known as the “fixed song” in eleventh and twelfth-century Organum.\textsuperscript{58} The \textit{tenorista} would sing the plainchant melody, while the \textit{machicotus} sang the \textit{duplum} or the “second melody” that was not written in the music.


\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 4.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 5.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
and somewhat more improvised at a higher range above the melody. Polyphonic sacred part writing evolved well into the fourteenth century during a time music scholars call *ars antiqua*, which lasted from 1170-1310.

Eventually, *ars antiqua* gave way to the *ars nova* or “new art” period which Potter explains was “characterized by greater rhythmic complexity;” it was also around this time that the *tenorista* was beginning to be called “tenor” for short, but his responsibilities evolved as the technique *isorhythm* was invented.59 This new compositional technique lead to the *isorhythmic motet*, and according to Margaret Bent it was considered “‘a piece of music in several parts with words’ is as precise a definition of the motet as will serve from the thirteenth to the late sixteenth century and beyond.”60 Around the same time as the *motet*, the *lauda* or *lauda spirituale* is considered by musicologists as the most significant form of vernacular sacred song in Italy. Blake Wilson in his article about the *lauda* in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* says “changes in the form and style of the *lauda* were conditioned largely by the shifting currents of religious devotion, politics, and styles of music and poetry.”61

The *lauda* is considered the predecessor to all solo singing, and it was this type of sacred

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music that San Filippo Neri utilized in the oratory of the Roman Church of Santa Maria of Vallicella that lead to the beginnings of Oratorio by the end of the sixteenth century.

Polyphonic sacred singing has continued to develop and remains a constant in churches all over Europe to this day, but at the turn of the sixteenth-century soloistic singing with *basso continuo* became very popular, and the opera theaters and oratorios in the church became the venue for its exhibition. The first successful tenor of distinction in music history who was sought after to perform these “new” compositions was Giulio Caccini (1551-1618). His talent as a singer is well documented and is considered the first tenor to have an international career. A member of the Florentine Camerata, Caccini was also known as a very influential composer, teacher, and writer; his *Le nuove musiche* (1602) is considered the first treatise on the new style of singing called monody established early in the Baroque era. Caccini’s influence on the history of tenor singing is similar to that of Carissimi’s on the genre of oratorio and his contemporary Peri’s on opera.

While Caccini did not necessarily reinvent singing during this period, he and the Camerata desired a singing style in which the text being sung followed a rhythm that resembled natural speech patterns, so the words were clearly understood, and the music would convey the emotions of the text. Caccini’s concept of *sprezzatura* or *rubato* is explained by Martha Elliott in her book *Singing in Style: A Guide to Vocal Performance Practices*. Elliott says, “To achieve the ‘speaking in singing,’ effect of the *stile*

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recitative, the singer is allowed both to bend the notated rhythms to fit the natural rhythm of the words and to shape the tempo to fit the text’s mood.”

Ellen T. Harris wrote a chapter titled “Voices” in _Performance Practices: Music After 1600_ that has much detail about singing during this period. She states that “Caccini encouraged the male singer to use only the ‘natural’ voice and to avoid the falsetto, ‘for from a feigned voice can come no noble manner of singing, which only proceeds from a natural voice’” as he explained in _Le nuove musiche._ Potter further explains his importance by saying:

Caccini stresses that his scores have all the information for the successful performance by singers other than himself (an early example of the composer trying to assert control over ‘his’ music, and restricted the creative additions that future singers are likely to make). The history of performance from this time onwards is one of a subtly changing balance of creativity between composer and performers.

It was in the Baroque era when what was expected of singers started to change and be solidified to what we know today. The new establishment set forth by the Florentine Camerata was the dawning of a new type of singing that allowed soloists to break out of their polyphonic prison, and join other musicians for the first time in a new virtuosic exploration of expression.

From this time moving forward many other important treatises on singing were written, like Tosi’s _Opinioni de' cantori antichi e moderni . . ._ (1723), singing techniques are conceived and taught. Most notably the _bel canto_ style of singing from the eighteenth

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and nineteenth centuries, and there is the proverbial “handing of the baton” from the castrati tradition of singing to what we now recognize as full-chested tenor singing. However, once the genre was invented the evolution of the tenor voice in oratorio has stayed relatively consistent through its history. The challenge vocal pedagogues face in understanding *Fach* delineation for certain voice types is this: everything else in music continued to progress around this exciting declamatory style of singing produced by the human voice.

**Understanding Fundamental Traditions in Oratorio Singing**

Performance history of the traditions for the specific work is paramount when studying any oratorio role for *Fach* delineation. Who were the original performers? If that is not easily known, then what was expected from trained singers during the time a work was composed? Even though it can be difficult to know exactly how singers originally sounded in any given repertoire, vocal pedagogues need to do their homework so that they can help young singers develop their natural potential as a classically trained singer. Martha Elliott in her book *Singing in Style: A Guide to Vocal Performance Practices*, helps in explaining this conundrum by saying “the historical documents, even when interpreted sensitively by modern scholars, can only give us a shadowy impression of what singers in the past sounded like, or how they sang.”

66 It is also important to understand that traditions change as the times change, and Elliott continues explaining

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the difficulty this can cause when assigning specific repertoire to young singers by saying:

In recent years both taste in singers and ideas about appropriate voices for certain repertoires have changed dramatically as well. Even given a specific area of the repertoire, the choices of performance approach are many: Handel’s Messiah or the Bach Passions, for example, can be presented with a full modern orchestra, large chorus, and ‘opera singers’ as soloist or, on the other extreme, with period instruments and a smaller complement of singers who are ‘early music specialist,’ or with any kind of combination of elements in between.67

From Elliott’s explanation above we can see that the same type of singer must not be expected to sing an oratorio with the extremely different circumstances in performance practice. Details about oratorio performance that are frequently overlooked when assigning repertoire outside of the operatic tradition: The type of accompaniment that will be supporting the voices, the magnitude of the orchestra or orchestration, and also the size of venue where a performance might possible take place.

As the conditions in a performance of an oratorio seem to fluctuate more often than opera, the same type of singer cannot be expected to blur the lines of Fach if the performance is not fitting for their type. The types of singers and styles of singing are very multidimensional in the world of music, and the appropriate singer can be found for any certain performance. Medieval and Renaissance singing is centered on the tenorista tradition of singing the cantus firmus in Organum. Potter explains that “the special skills of the medieval tenors have been lost completely,” and further clarifies that modern-day tenors have to “make a considerate adjustment to their modern techniques to be able to

cope with the demands of each line.” The type of singing that was produced in medieval times will be a different type of singing than we hear in the twenty-first century. Understanding the traditions of any musical genres established in the many different time periods helps singers to venture into the numerous types of singing during any particular time in musical history.

In the case of J.S Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*, there is little known about who, other than Bach himself, was involved in the Leipzig debut at the Thomaskirche in 1727, or when it was revived and restructured to its present form in 1736. During this period, singers commanded more authority than they do now, and in many ways, the singer dictated almost everything within a work. Richard Wistreich’s essay provides a glance into the world of intelligent singing before the nineteenth century, explaining that “total responsibility for all the principal performance decisions [are] on the singer . . . [no] reference to the ‘composition’ being sung at all, or to a conductor or director, illustrating clearly how important it is for the singer to be able to act independently.” He continues in his description by comparing the modern classical singing culture to the singing culture during Bach’s time by saying:

A singer’s individuality was expressed not so much through personal sound or timbre but rather by the often spontaneous choices he or she made from a vast palette of learned technical elements based on a precise understanding of the nature, function, place and social structure of the performance moment itself and of his or her position within these parameters.

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70 Ibid.
In Bach’s case, it would be very surprising if he gave total control to the singers who performed his works because of his reputation as a controlling taskmaster. While there has been a move, during the recent early music movement, to allow the singer more control, there are still many conductors that indicate every beat of every bar from beginning to end of a score. For instance, Helmuth Rilling is a modern-day conductor who maintains control of the recitatives he conducts. It is important to note that both schools of thought are considered valid depending on whom the conductor is, and one must be flexible and be willing to adapt to whatever the circumstances are of any particular performance situation.

Along with the “intelligence” described by Wistreich, the idea of the singer having a “finished voice” is also quite different from the singers during Bach’s time and those in the twenty-first century. Another scholar on this subject, Will Crutchfield, explains that “instead of beginning by strengthening the voice throughout the entire range of the voice . . . the emphasis was on clear differentiation of registers, strength in the lower and lightness in the upper.”\(^{71}\) Wistreich explains that “the most detailed sources we have about singing teaching in the eighteenth century, by Tosi (1723) and Mancini (1774), give precisely detailed explanations of how to develop the two registers and how they can be joined . . . it seems logical that the need to develop both the chest and falsetto registers was particularly crucial.”\(^{72}\) The singers in the Baroque era developed both

registers separately, and then connected them with a technique called *voix mixte* (mixed voice), which allowed them to realize a consistent voice timbre throughout the tessitura.

Wistreich further explains that “tenors, for example, sang notes above [F₄] in pure falsetto until the late eighteenth century, and thereafter the change-over to producing higher tones in chest register was gradual and often strongly resisted.”\(^{73}\) There are varied schools of thought on the approach to vocal technique when singing early music. Regarding historical knowledge, from the transfer of authority between the singer and the director to the extreme changes in vocal technique, a singer must be aware of the traditions in performance history in any particular vocal composition.

Life as a tenor can be challenging; the demands on this voice type have continuously evolved since its inception during Medieval times. Works by Léonin, where we first see the Latin term, are a demonstration of the aforementioned two-part model of compositions that led to the writing of compositions for the *tenorista* and the *machicots*. *Ars antiqua* gave way to the *ars nova*, and a new style of singing was well documented in the first singing treatise *Le nuove musiche* by Giulio Caccini who was the first real tenor to have an international singing career. “Tenoring” was quite different after Caccini put forth a new model of what it meant to be a tenor in the seventeenth century.

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\(^{72}\) Richard Wistreich, “Reconstructing pre-Romantic singing technique”, 184.

\(^{73}\) Ibid., 186.
The fundamental traditions in oratorio singing, and the techniques used therein evolved as the demands of different genre types of vocal repertoire progressed. The principal evolution in traditions to note is that in the Medieval period, the singer was in control of almost every aspect of a performance. This later evolved into the tenor being only responsible for himself and his own “artistry” in any particular performance. Having an understanding of how the art of singing, specifically for the tenor voice, evolved through the history of the oratorio is essential when assigning Fach to specific roles in the repertoire.

The Establishment of Oratorio and How Oratorio Expanded Throughout Europe

The roots of oratorio stem back to the “passion plays and portrayals of the legends of the saints” during the Middle Ages, but the inspirational exercise of hearing oratorio dates back to even before the mid-1600s in Italy where the tradition was firmly established in Rome.74 It was around that time that “the word oratorio had become recognized as a term for a music genre . . . [and] only in Rome does the word oratorio seem to have been used in relation to musical compositions,” according to Howard E. Smither in his book A History of the Oratorio, Vol. 1.75 There were many other musical settings that were similar to oratorio. These compositions were titled: Spiritual madrigal, motet, dialogus, dialogo, cantata, historia, actus musicus, dramma sacro, dramma


tragicum, componimento sacro, and azione sacra. As explained by Smither, those compositions were not considered oratorio simply because the composers labeled their work something different in the score.\textsuperscript{76} For example, many scholars recognize Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674) as one of the most influential Roman composers of early sacred homophony, but he was known for cultivating what he called the historia sacra also not calling his compositions “oratorios.”\textsuperscript{77} Since the many titles that were designated to similar compositions during this time in Italy and other places in Europe, it is difficult to know precisely when oratorio was firmly established in musical history. Musical taste started to evolve at the end of the sixteenth century, and it is around that time musicologists acknowledge that opera and oratorio came to the fore.

Just as it is complicated to pinpoint exactly when the history of oratorio begins, it can also be difficult to define precisely what it is. Oratorio is often compared to opera simply because they were conceived and developed together late in the sixteenth century and evolved into the seventeenth century. The first known opera performance was that of Jacopo Peri's Dafne in Florence in 1598, and many musicologists say that Rappresentazione di anima e di corpo by Emilio Cavalieri was the first oratorio performance given in Rome in 1600.\textsuperscript{78} One distinct difference between the two musical genres is often based on the subject matter. While opera was based on secular and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[76] Howard E. Smither, \textit{A History of the Oratorio: Volume 1}, 3-4.
\item[77] Kurt Pahlen, \textit{The World of the Oratorio}, 10.
\end{footnotes}
mythological themes, oratorio was predominantly based on sacred themes. Pahlen describes oratorio as “opera without theater - without sets, without costumes, without stage business; but in fact including action . . . opera is made up of three components: Text, music, and staging; the oratorio limits itself to the first two.”

Cavalieri’s work was considered opera in 1600 because it was staged and performed in a theatrical way. In modern-day scholarship and performance, Rappresentazione is seen more as an “oratorio” because of its subject matter and also because of how it was influential towards other works performed in oratories (smaller meeting place in the building); it played a significant role in establishing the genre early on in the seventeenth century.

Smither presents a definition more succinctly by saying “the oratorio is nearly always a sacred, unstaged work with text that is either dramatic or narrative-dramatic.”

While this is “nearly always” the case, there are several oratorios that don’t completely fall into this category. Several of these oratorios will be discussed in further detail in the chapters to follow in this document, as it is known that Bach’s Matthäus-Passion and Händel’s Samson have both been presented theatrically.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth century there was a decline in polyphonic singing and an incline towards homophony. Also because of the development of the figured bass and basso continuo near the beginning of the seventeenth century, oratorio and opera became more popular and started to flourish.

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80 Howard E. Smither, A History of the Oratorio: Volume 1, 3-4.
around the same time. Kurt Pahlen, in his book *The World of the Oratorio*, has distinguished that the beginnings of oratorio trace back to the oratory in the Roman Church of Santa Maria of Vallicella. Priest San Filippo Neri and his choir master Giovanni Animuccia (succeeded by Palestrina) founded the “Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity,” later to be named the “Congregation of the Oratorians.”

Smither states that “Neri used music as a means to draw into his oratory large numbers of souls from all walks of life so that he might then lead them on a path to salvation,” but as the art form grew in popularity “the genre’s social context from that of a spiritual exercise . . . [where] the emphasis on musical performance began to make of the oratory a virtual concert hall.” It is apparent that the public could not get enough of homophony or solo singing to harmonic accompaniment during this time, whether it was in a theater or an oratory.

Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674) was a very prominent figure as oratorio-like compositions started to flourish throughout Europe during the seventeenth century into the eighteenth century. Working in Rome, he was known as a composer and also a teacher to many influential composers that established the sacred dramatic genre in Italy. The musical genre eventually expanded to France, Austria, and Protestant Germany during the Baroque period and later to England and other parts of Germany in the Classical period. Although some music scholars have labeled Cavalieri as the inventor of

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82 Ibid.
the oratorio, it is this author’s opinion that Carissimi did more for the genre because of his impact on future composers all over Europe. Smither describes him as “by far the most famous composer of Latin oratorios in the mid-seventeenth century . . . his reputation and influence as an oratorio composer reached beyond Rome and Italy to northern Europe in his own time.” As previously indicated Carissimi did not directly title his compositions “oratorio,” but most were called *historia sacra*, which are also known as *oratorio latino*. This predecessor to what is recognized today as oratorio is derived from the thirteenth-century Italian *laude* and *motets*, and is defined by many musicologists as a musical composition with a Latin *libretto* based on a Biblical text from the Old Testament. Carissimi is considered to be quite a significant figure in the development of sacred music during the seventeenth century in Rome, but it is apparent that his influence extended beyond the city and even country borders.

Born in Paris, Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704), spent time as a young composer in Rome studying composition with Carissimi. In 1672, Charpentier returned home to work with Molière’s theater company, which helped him gain a reputation as a successful composer in Paris. His list of compositions range from operas, pastorals, ballets, and theater music, but his greatest output was that of sacred music where he wrote biblical tragedies, masses and other pieces that resembled the *oratorio latino*.

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Much like Carissimi, Smither explains that Charpentier would designate his pieces with many different titles like “motet, canticum, historia, dialogus, and meditation;” while none of his works designated any type of genre his Latin works and the texts used are much like the “mid-century Latin oratorios of Carissimi.” It is understood that the term oratorio was seldom used for a title in seventeenth-century French compositions, but because of Carissimi, and his pupil Charpentier, the genre oratorio was eventually recognized in Sébastien de Broussard’s Dictionnaire de musique (1703) early in the eighteenth century. While the list of composers who studied with Carissimi is quite exhaustive, Charpentier seems to be the only Frenchman who took these compositional techniques to Paris and influenced many composers of oratorio in the generations to follow in France.

During the Baroque Era in Vienna, much like in Charpentier’s Paris, oratorio was yet to be established as a musical genre. Similar to the historia sacra and oratorio latino in Rome and Paris, the sepolcro is seen by many modern-day scholars as an oratorio written in Italian during the Baroque Era in Vienna. Smither explains that the sepolcro “was similar to the oratorio . . . limited to the theme of the Passion and Crucifixion of Christ, and was intended to be performed with scenery, costumes, and action.” Johann Kaspar Kerll (1627-1693) was a composer in Vienna when the sepolcro began to

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86 Howard E. Smither, A History of the Oratorio: Volume 1, 421-424.

87 Ibid., 432.

88 Ibid., 366.
flourish; his *Pia et fortis mulier*, performed in 1677 in honor of Leopold I the Holy Roman Emperor (1640-1705), is considered a characteristic example of the musical genre.\(^{89}\) From 1647 to 1656, Kerll made quite an impact with his compositions at the Brussels court of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, who is known as a great patron of the arts.

C. David Harris and Albert C. Giebler explain, in their article in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* about the composer, how the Archduke “sent [Kerll] to Rome to study with Carissimi in the late 1640s and early 50s.”\(^{90}\) Kerll was also known as an influential teacher to minor composers during the Baroque period, but his influence is understood to reach German composers Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), and also to his son C.P.E. Bach (1714-1788) in Protestant Germany.\(^{91}\) J. S. Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*, BWV 244 (1727) will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Born the same year as J.S Bach, German-born composer Georg Friedrich Händel (1685-1759) is known as one of the most prominent baroque composers of his time. His musical success was predominantly made in London during the rise of what he developed as the English oratorio. As a young man, Händel was invited to Italy by the Medici family from 1706-1710, and during his time he was made quite aware of Carissimi’s compositions and is known to have borrowed from them in his works.\(^{92}\) He was deeply

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\(^{91}\) Ibid., 492.

\(^{92}\) Winston Dean, *Handel’s Dramatic Oratorios and Masques*, 8.
influenced by his contemporary and Carissimi’s pupil Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725), particularly in the structure of *recitativo secco* and *da capo* aria in his oratorios.\(^{93}\) When in Rome, Händel composed and premiered two oratorios in the Italian language: *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* (1707) and *La resurrezione* (1708).\(^{94}\) So while Händel was not directly under the tutelage of Carissimi or Scarlatti during his time in Italy, he was deeply woven into the fabric of the musical society when oratorio was being established as a musical genre. This training in Italy proved to be very important while he established the English Oratorio later in his career.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) were both prolific Austrian composers of sacred music during the Classical era. It is extensively known that they influenced each other in their compositional styles, but when it comes to their influence on sacred music and oratorio both revered Händel. Mozart’s opinion of the Baroque master is undeniable when he said in a famous quote that, “Handel understands effect better than any of us - when he chooses, he strikes like a thunderbolt.”\(^{95}\) Haydn later admitted that he was influenced by C.P.E. Bach’s compositions, but it is well documented that during his visits to England in 1791-1792 and 1794-1795 he was exposed to the “Handelian model” of the English oratorio.\(^{96}\)

\(^{93}\) Winston Dean, *Handel’s Dramatic Oratorios and Masques*, 8.

\(^{94}\) Ibid., 17.


Haydn will be further discussed in Chapter 4 along with Händel’s *Messiah* (1741), but it is important to recognize that his *Creation* (1798) and *Seasons* (1801) are firmly placed in the canon of oratorio repertoire along with Handel’s finest compositions.

From the famous Baroque composers, Carissimi and Händel to the Classical composer Haydn, the musical genre of oratorio was established over a span of more than two hundred years of history and continues to develop to this day. In Chapter 5, Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem*, Op. 66 (1962) from the 20th century will be further discussed to see how the oratorio has continued to develop from its seventeenth-century Italian model established by Carissimi in Rome.

The roots of oratorio go back to the Middle Ages and were firmly established as a genre around the beginning of the eighteenth century. Carissimi is known as the most influential composer of the genre as his teaching in Rome spread to the rest of Europe to directly or indirectly effect composers Charpentier, Kerll, Bach, Händel, Haydn and many others that can be found in the appendix of this document. The genre grew tremendously during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to give musicians in the twenty-first century the established cannon of Baroque and Classical Oratorio repertoire today.

Oratorio has continued to develop even further throughout the nineteenth, twentieth centuries up until today to establish Romantic, Twentieth-Century and even Modern works that are still performed regularly in churches and concert halls all over the world. Most notably is an oratorio from 2010 called *Ecclesiastes: A Modern Oratorio* by Kitty Brazelton (b. 1951) who composed what is being called a “liturgical opera” with
“experimental new classical music” using computer effects and some acoustic instruments to what seems to be a demanding style of singing.  

Understanding the history of oratorio, along with the European Fach System, can aid both singers and teachers alike in making informed and appropriate decisions when matching Fach to roles in oratorio repertoire. Informed repertoire selections create the opportunities for the healthy and supportive development of a young classically trained singer’s career. Further, learning roles in the Fach specific to the singer will ensure a longer and more vital vocal career.

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CHAPTER 3. RECOMMENDED ORATORIO FACH SYSTEM FOR TENOR VOICES


One can see the challenge with the probable titles listed by Lehmann for a modern-day performance in his allegations toward performers who do not completely understand the responsibility they have to fully research a work and its composer before they go into a performance opportunity. Max Spicker expressed this sentiment by saying “Such are the pregnant and weighty pronouncements of an experienced man deeply versed in musico-historical lore and research . . . they should be of the highest value to the serious artist.”99 It takes a well-rounded approach, understanding the myriad of disciplines necessary for a classically trained singer to present, within their ability and stage of development, a historically accurate representation of what the composer intended when putting pen to paper for any particular composition. An Oratorio Fach System will be realized in this document, to help with Fach delineation in oratorio repertoire from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern eras. Suggestions found in this chapter can be cross-referenced with the steps in Appendix 1 of this document.


The Many Questions To Be Answered

Five questions - who, what, when, where, and why - are questions one might ask themselves as they gather appropriate information for a well-informed performance of any work, meeting the expectations and the norms from an educated audience in the twenty-first century. First, who is the composer and when did they live? What did they compose during their lives? This information will provide the musical period when the composer wrote music, e.g., Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, 20th century, or Modern. Once the musical period is determined, then the appropriate singing style can be studied in voice treatises from that time, or modern scholarly research that is well documented and researched. Even with thorough research, Martha Elliot in her book *Singing in Style* describes that “the historic documents, even when interpreted sensitively by modern scholars, can only give us a shadowy impression of what singers in the past sounded like, or how they sang” in any given performance of an oratorio.  

Secondary resources on singing and singers from the past are also imperative to consider.

Also found in supported research are the instrumentation and orchestration commonly utilized to accompany the voices during the era in which the music was written, as well as the tuning and temperament of said instruments. Are those variables the same as or different from what is expected in a modern-day performance of the same work? Who was the audience then, and who is the audience now? In what type of venue

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would a performance of a piece have taken place during the composer’s time, and how is that similar to or different from the twenty-first century?

Other questions to keep in mind are: Where was the composer born, where were they when the piece was composed, and why did they compose a particular work? Typically, the composer will use their native language, but there are many occasions when this was not the case. As seen in Chapter 2, many liturgical settings of oratorio are often written in Latin, and there are numerous examples of a foreign composer who will write a piece in the language where they reside, e.g., German-born composer Händel wrote *Messiah* in English while living in England. (Händel’s *Messiah* will be further explored in Chapter 4). Knowing where they were born can also lead to more questions: Who were some of their colleagues in the arts living in the same city, country or beyond borders? Who else was composing around the same time, and are their composition styles similar or different? Did they compose for a similar combination of instruments? Who were their main influences in composition and also in what types of genres did they mostly write? For example, Bach was deeply influenced by Christian/Lutheran theology, while he was employed to write many sacred compositions for the church.

Who typically would have sung the works during the composer’s lifetime? What did they sound like? What was the relationship between singer and composer? Martha Elliott states that in the early Baroque era “composers collaborated closely with performers or participated in performances themselves,” and “if a composer were involved in the rehearsal process, he could tell the performers exactly what he
An example of this was when Händel composed *Samson* with John Beard’s voice in mind. This composer and performer pairing will be further discussed in Chapter 5. Answering as many of these questions as possible can lead a performer in the right direction in placing a work in its historical perspective, starting to assign an appropriate Fach to a particular role, and interpreting any work they would have the opportunity to perform.

Having all of this information so one can place the work into a historical context is a helpful start in understanding a particular piece, but then any individual singer might also have a self-awareness regarding their technical abilities as a singer and artist. Elliott confirms this statement by saying that it is important for “singers to take into account their vocal type, as well as the natural strengths and weaknesses of their instrument when choosing repertoire.”**102** Considering these questions will help to decipher if one is ready or able to sing any particular work after it has been put into a historical perspective. If all of these questions can be clearly answered, listening to several recordings of any particular work which will lead to even more imperative queries to take into account.

**Examine Professional Oratorio Recordings**

When trying to determine whether a role from an oratorio lies in a specific Fach, in a system that has historically been used for opera, one might practice listening to a

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**102** Ibid., 2.
selection of recordings to compare the qualities of the singers therein. In most professional recordings, the singers employed will meet the requirements of a “tradition” that has been firmly established in musical history for the oratorio role one would like to study. There are different tempi and different treatment of the texts, and in music from the Baroque era, there is a choice to perform a piece of music A=415 Hz or A=440 Hz, or whether the instrumentalists play on modern or period instruments. An effective method to learn how a particular composition sounds, and to differentiate which Fach the role possibly fits, is to listen to an assortment of professional singers performing the oratorio matching their voice types to operatic roles with certain criteria in mind.

In this exercise, it can be helpful to see if the liner notes to the recording have a biography of each singer available, and often they will have several operatic roles listed that they have performed in their career. Matching these opera roles to established Fach sources can be useful information when delineating Fach for oratorio. Martha Elliot stresses that one listen to multiple professional recordings of a work or piece of music to gain an idea of a particular style of singing. 103 Within different recordings, key audible information can be heard that is valuable to a young singer, and noting the variety of approaches will enhance the singer’s awareness of the scale of interpretation. Does the voice heard on a professional recording have a similar timbre to the listener’s voice? Is the listener’s voice the right size and quality to match the traditions of what has been considered acceptable in a performance of any particular piece? These last two questions

could be the hardest of all to answer truthfully, and that is where a voice teacher or vocal coach have knowledge that can guide a young singer down the right path in choosing appropriate repertoire for their voice.

These questions will be asked and answered for every composer and oratorio studied in this document moving forward, to help with *Fach* delineation for each tenor role therein. As one can imagine the answers will be quite varied for each composition researched, but hopefully, the ending result of understanding the historical backgrounds, what the composers intended, and what has traditionally been produced of each oratorio might then be at the grasp of the reader. If their or their student’s voice is firmly established in the tenor *Fächer*, the information moving forward may prove to be beneficial in their future performance practices of oratorio repertoire.

**What is the Range and *Tessitura* of a Solo Oratorio Role?**

Some of the more important questions considering *Fach* classification for a probable singer interested in the work: First, what is the range of solo part to be sung? What is the *tessitura* (“texture” in Italian) of the tenor role to be sung? The range is understood to be the distance from the lowest note to the highest note of any given part in a work. Does the singer in question have the technical ability to sing the range demanded by the composer? The vocal *tessitura* is understood as the “part of the voice where the singer is most comfortable,”¹⁰⁴ and is also understood as the average range of the solo

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part to be sung in a work, e.g., the tenor role in Verdi’s *Messa da Requiem* (1874) has a range of $C_2 - B^b_4$ and a *tessitura* of $G_3 - G_4$. To take a cue from Kloiber, one might figure out if the tenor oratorio role is either small, medium, or large. If it is a larger role, stamina and experience play a part in delineating *Fach* for a particular role.

**Orchestration for the Oratorio, and Numbers Involved in Performance**

As is the case in any art form, subjectivity, taste, and traditions are taken into account when making choices about casting. If in any typical oratorio role, the vocal quality is too heavy or too light, or if the vocal registration of a particular singer is too high or too low, then it would not fit within the traditions of what is preferred matching the size of the orchestra and chorus. What is the size of the orchestra, and are they playing on period or modern-day instruments? Is there a chorus in the oratorio, and does the soloist sing with them? If so, what is the size of the chorus, and will it be difficult for the soloist to project and be heard at the same time?

Knowing what arrangement and size of production of an oratorio one could be singing, could be the most vital information for a young singer to know. Possible results for “General Orchestration” in this document will be Baroque Orchestra, Classical Orchestra, Early Romantic Orchestra, Late Romantic Orchestra or Modern Orchestra.

**What Are Optimal Venues for Oratorio Performance?**

Oratorios can be performed in all sorts of settings, from a minimalistic version with piano in a small church to a version with a full orchestra in a large concert hall.
Knowing the many choices that can be made in executing any particular work can drastically change one’s approach in assessing a Fach classification for a particular role in any oratorio. The size of the venue where the work is to be performed are also traditions one can take into account. The larger the venue, the more one will need to project to fill the acoustic space. Possible results for “Optimal Venue” in this Doctoral of Musical Arts document will be Cathedral, Concert Hall, Large Cathedral or Large Concert Hall.

**Study The Score with Vocal Technique in Mind**

Studying the score is paramount when trying to distinguish a particular Fach classification for any role. A comprehension of one’s Fach along with an awareness of the variations in strategy within each passage allow one to make good strategic approaches dramatically and technically when studying a role in oratorio repertoire. When looking at vocal acoustics and the science behind all that is involved, it can be very insightful in delineating Fach for roles in oratorio. If a classically trained singer or vocal pedagogue take into consideration the rather complicated acoustical activities that must be accomplished to correct the naturally-occurring acoustical phenomena through the passaggi, it is easier to understand that the relationship between where these passaggi are in a specific voice comparing them to the range and tessitura of a given oratorio role.

Understanding the International Italian School of Singing bel canto, and its techniques of aggiustamento and copertura, while looking into the research of Richard Miller, Scott McCoy and Donald Gray Miller can provide ample information to
understand the characteristics that apply to each *Fach* acoustically. When implementing the aforementioned techniques, it is paramount that each singer is diligent in finding what works for their voice. Vowel and acoustical modifications for one voice are not necessarily the same modifications for another. Most of what is gleaned from this research is clinical and not personal. While physical build is considered the least important of the variables taken into account for *Fach* classification, physiology of a singers’ vocal tract or resonator does play an enormous part in determining *Fach*. A person’s physical build can sometimes be misleading, but the physiology of a singer’s actual instrument can give proper insight into *Fach* delineation.\(^\text{105}\)

In conclusion, these questions will be asked and answered for every composer and oratorio studied in this document, to help with *Fach* delineation for each tenor role therein. As one can imagine the answers will be quite varied for each composition, but the ending result of a historically accurate presentation of possibly what the composer intended can then be at the grasp of the reader if they are so inclined.

This document focuses on how this Oratorio *Fach* System relates to the tenor voice specifically, but other voice types can adapt the material to fit their specific needs when evaluating vocal repertoire. After doing the necessary research about an oratorio, and answering the questions of the type of performance one would like to achieve, singers have the opportunity to pick an interpretation that best suits their voice.

\(^{105}\)In the most recent scholarship, physical build doesn’t often fit a person’s voice type. In general, what the listener perceives as a “big voice” doesn’t mean that it will belong to a big person and vice versa. Therefore, not a reliable attribute when delineating *Fach*. Richard Miller, *Training Tenor Voices*, 12.
CHAPTER 4. ORATORIO ROLES FOR THE TENORE LEGGIERO AND TENORE LIRICO

The most famous and highly rewarded singers have often been those capable of pushing their physical resources to perform in a range beyond the point at which most people would feel hysteria or strangulation, to produce, against the odds, beautiful, controlled sound... The tenor voice is, in its highest register, only a degree removed from hysteria, from the frantic screams of extreme emotion. We ‘raise’ our voices, not just in volume but also in pitch, when we are emotionally aroused; a shout or a scream is high, not low... This is the stuff of emotional intensity, of heroic ardour, love, honor, anger, resolution.106 - Daniel Snowman

As a successful writer on social and cultural history, Snowman describes the tenor voice quite well in his book titled Placido Domingo: Tales from the Opera, which covers the magnificent operatic career of the famous Spanish tenor up until the mid-1990s. The tenor voice evokes many things as listed above in Snowman’s quote, but the one word he omitted from his list: Passion! The cries of “Mimi!” howled in pain by Rodolfo at the end of Puccini’s La bohème (1896) stirs even the coldest heart to sorrowfulness for one who was passionately loved and then immediately lost to a grave illness. Many would find the same emotion in the cries of the Evangelista in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion in the recitative “Und da sie an die Stätte kamen.” This recitative depicts the scene in detail at Golgotha after Jesus is nailed to the cross, and is one of the most descriptive passages leading up to the death of Christ. Also, the end of part II in Händel’s Messiah, the tenor sings the recitative “He that dwelleth in heaven” and aria “Thou shalt break them” in

106 Daniel Snowman, Placido Domingo’s Tales from the Opera (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1994), 35, 37.
anger towards the people of Israel who mocked and scorned Jesus just before death.\textsuperscript{107}

Each scene depicts the harsh realities of death using the timbre of the tenor voice to awaken the senses and the soul of the listener, and this sound quality can cause an outpour of emotion, which might not have the same effect coming from a different voice type. Throughout the history of music, composers have used the tenor voice for the reasons listed above, bringing the emotion and excitement to the text written in the drama that unfolds.

The \textit{Tenore lirico}, in comparison to all other tenor \textit{Fächer}, is the most commonly utilized tenor voice type in the solo vocal repertoire. Richard Boldrey in his book \textit{Guide to Operatic Roles & Arias} lists all of the roles for every voice type in much of the operatic repertoire and also the \textit{Fach} with which they are closely associated. In many of his suggestions for \textit{Fach} classification, Bordley lists up to three or more voice types per role, taking into account the magnitude of different opera productions.\textsuperscript{108} Therefore, multiple \textit{Fächer} could be deemed acceptable for consideration with each role. Boldrey supports this practice by stating that:

\begin{quote}
Since differences of opinion exist with respect to the classification of many roles, various possibilities are listed... The choice was governed by several factors, including the composer’s designation, the history of casting the role, and the singers who sing the role today. Other factors include the type of opera and size of orchestra.\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{The gender of the singer opposed to the gender of the character is often in question, e.g. “pant role” or “skirt role” as listed by Richard Boldrey, \textit{Guide to Operatic Roles & Arias} (Dallas, TX: Psst. Inc., 1994), 2.}
\footnote{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
He makes a clear distinction between “Full Lyric Tenor” and the heavier Tenore lirico spinto, and “Full Lyric Tenor” is suggested for almost three-hundred operatic roles in Boldrey’s book. It is important to notice that this is more than any other tenor Fach, though “Light Lyric Tenor” roles or Tenore leggiero were not far behind in the tally. Many of the roles listed by Boldrey from each of these latter two categories overlapped in Fach assignments. Some of the most popular oratorios in the canon are also well suited to the Tenor lirico Fach; Bach’s Matthäus-Passion, Handel’s Messiah and Haydn’s Creation are perfect examples.

Bach’s Passions

In Schmieder’s catalog – the Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (BWV) - BWV 244-249 and BWV 11 contain the passions and oratorios composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), and this is the section in which his Matthäus-Passion is listed. Sources say that Bach composed five settings of the passion tale in his lifetime, but only his Johannes-Passion, BWV 245 (1724) and Matthäus-Passion, BWV 244 (1727) are fully recognized in his list of compositions. These compositions are about the life and death of Jesus based on texts from the books of Matthew and John found in the New Testament of the Bible. Although Bach wrote many sacred compositions in the genre of the cantata

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and also several compositions based on liturgical Latin text, the settings of the passion story will be featured in this study of Fach delineation for tenors in Bach’s vocal compositions. When trying to delineate Fach for tenor oratorio roles in Bach’s vocal music, a basic understanding of his history, compositional style and influence in the Baroque period and later is imperative.

The Evangelista in Matthäus-Passion is a useful role to study when trying to understand the appropriate Fach designation for this repertoire. In the opinion of this author, this role might be best considered a zwischenfach role, as many different styles of performance of the work occur. Especially if Matthäus-Passion is performed at “Baroque Pitch” (A=415 Hz), more than one Fach classification might be considered for this role.

**Evangelista in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion: Leggiero or Lirico?**

When studying the role of the Evangelista in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion, one might have an idea of what type of performance they are expecting. Since there are many varieties of performance in which one might sing the role of the Evangelista in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion, it may well be best considered as a zwischenfach role or at least viable for two different Fächer dependent upon the style of performance. The translation of zwischenfach is “between Fach,” and it is understood in the European Fach System as a role that seems to share characteristics of neighboring categories.113 The term

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zwischenfach is also associated with undeveloped voices not yet wanting to be “pigeonholed” into a specific Fach, allowing them to bridge the gap between two or more voice classifications remaining undefined. Jennifer Allen in her study on zwischenfach shares that “the most important reason to avoid early voice classification is to dissuade drawing attention away from basic vocal technique and musical development.”

Many young singers use this nebulous delineation in voice classification to remain flexible in their approach to repertoire, preferably under the guidance of a voice teacher or coach, as their voice and technique evolve. This understanding of zwischenfach relates to the role of the Evangelista, and that will be made more evident moving forward.

**Performance Flexibility in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion**

As will be apparent in the exploration of this work, there is a good deal of flexibility in performances of music from the Baroque period. There are different tempi, different treatment of the texts, and the questions that are most often asked: Do we perform A=415 Hz or A=440 Hz, and do we play on modern or period instruments?

Martha Elliott clarifies more about this tuning issue by explaining that the standard modern pitch of A=440 Hz was “established in 1939 at an international conference in London.”

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tuning them down to A=415 Hz, “came into practice much more recently. . . as a convenient solution to the complex problems involved in establishing historical pitch levels.”\textsuperscript{116} She continues to explain that, “for the modern singer, the decision to sing certain repertoire at a lower pitch level may allow one to achieve a different sound quality or to execute certain ornaments more easily.”\textsuperscript{117} Clearly, if A= 415 Hz is selected for a performance, a different \textit{Fach} of tenor may well be called for in casting the role. In reviewing the following two recordings of Bach’s \textit{Matthäus-Passion}, one can determine which \textit{Fach} are used most commonly for the role of Evangelista. Specifically, this review will track the performance history of the singers therein, and examine the effectiveness of each singer.

**Professional Recordings of Bach’s \textit{Matthäus-Passion} Examined**

The first recording of Bach’s \textit{Matthäus-Passion} to be reviewed is from 2003 by the conductor Paul McCreesh (b. 1960). As indicated in the liner notes, Paul McCreesh is “one of the most talented and versatile directors in the field of early music and has gained an outstanding international reputation for his challenging performances of Renaissance and Baroque music.”\textsuperscript{118} It is important to note that this recording is performed on period instruments which are tuned to A=415 Hz. Of particular note is that


\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.

there is only one singer for each chorus part, which is the focus of recent scholarship by American musicologist Joshua Rifkin and English music scholar John Butt. Butt’s article titled *Bach’s Vocal Scoring: What Can It Mean?* states, that “it is said that Bach seems to have performed the majority of his choral works with one singer to a part.”¹¹⁹ In an interview with McCreesh, he shares that “if the early music movement is serious . . . how can we ignore 20 years of astoundingly erudite scholarship without at least trying to make it work?”¹²⁰ Attempting to technically recreate authentic performance from our understanding of Western music history proves to be somewhat challenging since we are over 200 years removed.

In the McCreesh recording, the Evangelista does not just sing his assigned role, but also all of the tenor parts in Chorus I, which includes the recitative and aria “*O Schmerz! Hier zittert das gequälte Herz* . . . *Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen*” which is traditionally sung by a different tenor than the Evangelista. Most interesting is the fact that the Evangelista sings recitatives directly before and after this recitative and aria. When asked about the “stamina aspect for the singers” in his interview, McCreesh says “even for the Evangelista - who admittedly does have a fairly tough time - it’s no more demanding than a major opera role . . . and the piece is brilliantly scored.”¹²¹ Classically trained singers in the twenty-first century are expected to have the stamina to sing lengthy

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¹²¹ Ibid., 17.
roles on the operatic stage, and these expectations are no different on the concert stage. There are enough pauses between entrances for the Evangelista to rest, and overall, the tessitura of the role lies mostly in the middle voice.

There are four singers on each part of Chorus I, and four singers on each part of Chorus II totaling only nine vocal soloists with another soprano voice singing only the “Soprano in ripieno” parts indicated in the score. The orchestra on this recording is the Gabrielli Consort & Players which McCreesh founded in 1982, and their “interpretations strive to recreate the original performances of musical works as far as possible, in the belief that historical performance ideals and knowledge of the old world.” The ensemble performs Bach’s work on period instruments including some instruments not generally used in ‘modern’ performances: Recorders, oboe da caccia, and viola da gamba. For this recording, the total players in Orchestras I and II combined are only twenty-seven. The chamber orchestra balances the number of vocalists very well.

Mark Padmore (b. 1961) is the Evangelista and the tenor in Chorus I in the McCreesh recording, and, according to his biography, “in 1982 he began working with a number of period performance choirs and ensembles and has since won acclaim throughout the world for his musicality and intelligence of his singing.” He has performed the operatic roles of Don Ottavio in Mozart’s Don Giovanni, Ferrando in Mozart's Così fan tutte, the title role in Britten’s Albert Herring and many others.

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According to Kloiber, McGinnis, and Willis, all three roles listed above fit comfortably within the *Tenore lirico Fach*.\textsuperscript{124,125} The tenor’s “timbre must be warm, romantic, exciting and vital,” as depicted by Richard Miller in *Training Tenor Voices*.\textsuperscript{126} Moreover, this *Fach* is described by McGinnis and Willis in *The Opera Singer's Career Guide* as “a soft, warm, flexible voice with an extremely effective and easy top range.”\textsuperscript{127} Padmore fits the descriptions put forth by these specialists and manages this repertoire with great ease and success. In a review of this role by Lynne Walker, in an issue of *The Independent* from 2010, she describes that “[Padmore’s] improvisatory freedom of dynamics and tempo, and lyrical authority, made it sound as if he were recalling this dreadful sequence of events as they came back to him.”\textsuperscript{128} It would seem that Mark Padmore is an ideal tenor for the role of the Evangelista in Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*.

The second recording of Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion* to be reviewed is from 2005 and led by the conductor Helmut Müller-Brühl (1933-2012). This particular recording is drastically different from the recording by McCreesh. Many would say that this recording is guided by a more “modern” style of performing Bach’s work, and the approach is one that has often been reproduced over the last century of its performance.

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history. In stark contrast to the first recording, there are eighteen singers respectively in each chorus totaling some thirty-six voices from the Dresden Chamber Choir.\textsuperscript{129} In addition to the chorus, there is the Cologne Cathedral Boys’ Choir that sings the “Soprano in ripieno” parts indicated in the score. While the number of singers in this choir is not listed in the liner notes, in addition to the thirty-six singers from the Dresden Chamber Choir they have at least quadrupled the numbers from the recording by McCreesh. Likewise, the orchestras, comprised of the members of Cologne Chamber Orchestra, have twenty-two players in Orchestra I, and nineteen in Orchestra II.\textsuperscript{130} With a total number almost doubling the first recording, this orchestra plays on modern instruments.

The change in overall sound quality from the first recording is most evident when the Evangelista sings his first entrance, as it is perceivably higher in tessitura and timbre because A is tuned to 440 Hz (modern pitch). It is important to point out that the recitatives and arias from Chorus I and II, as indicated in the score, are sung by another tenor soloist on this recording - Markus Schäfer (b. 1961). It is typical to have two different tenor soloists in this type of performance of Bach’s \textit{Matthäus-Passion} and is often performed in this manner when so many numbers are involved and $A = 440$ Hz. The recitatives and arias are “traditionally” sung by a \textit{Tenore lirico}, so this same tenor


\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 3.
Fach may have difficulty singing the Evangelista passages with the ease of the Tenore leggiero.

The Evangelista in the second recording is the Dutch tenor Nico van der Meel. He studied choral conducting and completed his vocal studies at the Rotterdam Conservatory in 1987, and as indicated in the liner notes he has “a concert repertoire ranging from the sixteenth century to the contemporary . . . [having] appeared with leading conductors.” Most interesting about his biography is that he “is a member of the Camerata Trajectina Ensemble and since 1981 has directed the William Byrd Vocal Ensemble.” Operatic roles he has performed are Sellem in Stravinsky’s The Rake’s Progress (1951), Pedrillo in Mozart’s Entführung aus dem Serail and Camacho in Mendelssohn’s Die Hochzeit des Camacho. According to Kloiber, McGinnis, Willis and Miller, all three roles seem to be in the Spieltenor Fach. Miller describes the Spieltenor, saying that “his passaggi may be those of the leggiero if he is on the light side of the category.” The timbre most associated with Nico van der Meel’s voice would be Tenore leggiero and according to Miller, “his timbre is generally characterized by

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132 Ibid.
133 Rudolf Kloiber, Handbuch der Oper: Band 1 Adam - Prokofjew, 336, 379.
134 Rudolf Kloiber, Handbuch der Oper: Band 2 Puccini - Zimmermann, 584.
136 Richard Miller, Training Tenor Voices, 10.
sweetness, and he must possess considerable control over musical dynamics.” While his timbre does have “sweetness” to it, there seem to be some difficulties in the extremes of his voice, consistent with the characteristics of the *Fach* of *Tenore leggiero*. As such, Nico van der Meel is certainly an acceptable tenor for the role of the Evangelista in Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*.

**Excerpts from the Role of Evangelista in Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion***

*Recitative: “O Schmerz, hier zittert das gequälte Herz”*  
*&Aria: “Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen”*

**Keys:** c minor (f minor → A\textsuperscript{b} Major → b\textsuperscript{b} minor → c minor) → g minor  
**Range:** F\textsubscript{3} – B\textsubscript{4}\textsuperscript{b}  
**Tessitura:** G\textsubscript{3} – G\textsubscript{4}  

**Timbre:**

The Evangelista is the narrator in this setting of *Passion unseres Herrn Jesu Christi nach dem Evangelisten Matthäus* (Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew) by Bach. This individual is often cast because they are a gifted orator, making sure that their diction of the text is explicitly clear as they sing the recitatives. There are typically no supertitles as one would see in an opera production, so clarity of text is paramount in a production of *Matthäus-Passion* or any other work similar to it. The text to every scene in this story has very descriptive language, and Bach was masterful in his text painting throughout the work.

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The recitative right before this musical excerpt features the Evangelista and Jesus, setting the scene of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane along with the disciples. Bach utilizes text painting for both characters in a darker and heavier tonal color, signaling a change in the story. Up to this scene, the Evangelista had been restricted predominantly to matter-of-fact syllabic text in his narration, but here Bach starts to use more expressive and demonstrative setting of text to show that the Evangelista is becoming more emotionally involved. His emotional connection is particularly noticeable on the descending melisma, coupled with a descending augmented fourth, on the phrase “... fing an zu trauern und zu zagen.”138 This text painting starts to display the grief the Evangelista is feeling for Jesus, foreshadowing what is to come. This sadness and heaviness both shown by Jesus and the Evangelista transitions brilliantly into the next recitative and aria.

The opening phrase of the recitative, O Schmerz! hier zittert das gequälte Herz (O pain, here trembles the tormented heart), begins a dialogue between the chorus and the tenor soloist (ostensibly, still the Evangelista in character) as to why Jesus is emotionally tormented at this moment. Leading to the aria where the tenor soloist makes a declaration to “keep watch by [his] Jesus” in prayer, much as the disciples in the Passion story did in the Garden of Gethsemane right before they fall asleep and Jesus was betrayed. The timbre of this excerpt, much like that of the entire passion, is somewhat heavy and dark in color. This seems to demand a slightly more heroic quality to the

138 German Translation: “... began to be very sorrowful and very heavy.” Johann Sebastian Bach, Matthäus-Passion (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, n.d.(ca.1876)), 46.
sound from the tenor soloist in his expressions of emotion and devotion towards Jesus and his situation.

*Passaggi:*

With the *passaggi* for the male voice in mind, as it relates to this recitative and aria, there are eleven notes at or above *secondo passaggio* for the *Tenore leggiero* (Ab⁴), and twenty-two notes at or above *secondo passaggio* for the *Tenore lirico* (G⁴). The range and *tessitura* indicate that the *lirico* has to adjust sooner than the *leggiero* as he ascends the scale, and negotiates the higher *tessitura* by an acoustical adjustment at G⁴ and above. Since this recitative and aria travel in and out of the *zona di passaggio* for both *Fächer*, there will unavoidably be a need for acoustical adjustment (*aggiustamento*), but the *Tenore leggiero* would need to adjust less often than the *Tenore lirico*. Looking more closely at the score, one can see that the recitative takes both *Fächer* up and over *secondo passaggio* regularly, emphasizing the emotions of the text. (Figures 4.1 & 4.2).

The overall weight and heroic quality associated with the *Tenore lirico*, in comparison to the *Tenore leggiero*, is most necessary to portray the emotions expressed in this recitative and aria. Especially if A=440 Hz for a performance of Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*, it is often expected to have a different tenor soloist (*lirico*) sing the selections not indicated for the Evangelista (*leggiero*).
In the recitative and arias that seem more appropriate for a lirico, the lighter tenor could have some difficulty deciphering when to adjust acoustically, especially if trying to force a false heroic sound that he naturally wouldn’t possess, because his secondo passaggio is above the highest note of the tessitura indicated by Bach. The Tenore lirico has a much

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140 Ibid., 50.
clearer understanding where to change decisively at the G₄ of the tessitura, which makes it easier to maintain voce piena in testa as he ascends through the secondo passaggio to the higher notes of the role.

Copertura:

In the aria, Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen, the climactic phrase in the aria sings up to and over the secondo passaggio for the lirico. The phrase is an ascending conjunct melody on the words sein Trauen machet mich voll Freuden – a text which ardently conveys one of the core values of Christian theology – that Jesus through His pain and suffering leads the Christian into joy. This phrase can be challenging to execute if the singer attempts rounded cover or maintains an “open” voce aperta sound on the vowel [a] of “Trauen” and “machet.” A better solution, the bel canto copertura approach, would be to sing the vowel [ʌ] on the two words executing more of a voce chiusa result (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. Mm. 27-28 of vocal line in “Ich will bei meinem Jesus wachen” from Bach’s Matthäus-Passion, indicating primo passaggio (-- ---) D₄ and secondo passaggio (-----) G₄ for Tenore lirico on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for aggiustamento and copertura procedure.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Johann Sebastian Bach, Matthäus-Passion, 53-54.
Likewise, on the word “Freuden,” the tenor negotiates back and forth between the vowels [ɔ] and [ʌ] around *seundo passaggio*. This vowel tracking will help the *lirico* avoid heavy physical adjustment, and instead feel more of the acoustical adjustment necessary by slightly modifying the vowels back and forth in this ascending and descending scale.

Looking closer at this role conceivably as a *Zwischenfach*, it would appear that both tenor *Fächer* seem to be ideal for the Evangelista in Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*. The variations in which this oratorio can be performed seem to suggest one type over the other, but there is supportable research to warrant both *Fächer* in this role (Table 3).

Table 4.1: Resulting information for the role of Evangelista in Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*.142

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)</th>
<th><em>Matthäus-passion</em>, BWV 244 (1727)</th>
<th>Evangelista (large)</th>
<th>D$_3$ - B$^b_4$ / G$_3$ – G$_4$</th>
<th>Baroque Orchestra</th>
<th>Large Cathedral / Concert Hall</th>
<th>Tenore leggiero / Tenore lirico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Tenor Role in Händel’s *Messiah*, HWV 56 (1742)**

Händel’s most celebrated sacred work is sung every Advent season in churches and concert halls all over the world. Due to the many varieties of performances in which one could sing the tenor role in Händel’s *Messiah*, a variety of singers could be utilized to sing in a production of the oratorio, making it somewhat difficult to place this role in an unambiguous *Fach*. By reviewing a recording of *Messiah*, one can determine which *Fach* are most commonly used for the tenor role. Specifically, this review will examine

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142 Similar results for other tenor *Fächer* in much of the oratorio repertoire found on pp. 128 of this document.
the traditions which are commonly utilized in a modern-day performance, the quality of
the tenor soloist’s sound, and track a little of the performance history of the singer.

**Professional Recording of Händel’s *Messiah* Examined**

The recording of Händel’s *Messiah* to be reviewed is from 2006 by the conductor
Sir Charles Mackerras (1925-2010). This highly sought-after conductor worked with the
Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Welsh National Opera, San Francisco Opera, Czech
Philharmonic Orchestra and many others. He is known as a musicologist who researched
the performance practices of the 18th and 19th centuries, producing his arrangements and
performing editions of the works of Sullivan, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and
others.\(^{143}\) The English Chamber Orchestra and the London choral group, The Ambrosian
Singers, are featured on this recording. Singing the tenor role is Welsh singer Robert
Tear (1939-2010). Tear regularly sang at the Welsh National Opera, Royal Opera
House, Covent Garden in London.\(^{144}\) In his career, Tear was mostly known for his depiction of
the operatic tenor roles of Benjamin Britten, but he was also renowned for the roles of
Lensky in Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin*, Belmonte in Mozart’s *Entführung aus dem
Serail* and Malcolm in Verdi’s *Macbeth*. Kloiber, McGinnis, and Willis all list the tenor
roles above as being large roles firmly placed in the *Fach of Tenore lirico*, which the


Tenor role in Händel’s Messiah is listed as the same in this document.\textsuperscript{145,146,147} Robert Tear is a perfect match for the Tenor role in Händel’s Messiah, bringing a slightly darker timbre, \textit{fioritura}, and heroism that is often lacking in interpretations of this role.

\textbf{Excerpts from the Tenor Role in Händel’s Messiah}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Recitative: “They rebuke hath broken His heart”
  \item Aria: “Behold, and see if there be any sorrow”
  \item Recitative: “He was cut off out of the land of the living”
  \item Aria: “But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell”
\end{itemize}

Keys: \textit{a} minor (A\textsuperscript{b} Major → B Major) → e minor
\textit{e} minor (b minor → E Major) → A Major

Range: \textit{D}\textsuperscript{#3} – \textit{G}4

Tessitura: \textit{F}3 – \textit{F}4

Timbre:

All of the singers in Messiah, both soloists and chorus, act as the narrator in Händel’s oratorio. Each person is involved in narrating the story of prophecy, life, death, resurrection, and also the second coming of the Messiah. The tenor soloist has recitatives and arias which display all of the emotions evoked by the story, and therefore often has a voice with substance to clearly project over the often robust and emotional orchestration from Händel. The recitatives “Thy rebuke . . .” and “He was cut off . . .” in this excerpt

\textsuperscript{145} Rudolf Kloiber, \textit{Handbuch der Oper: Band 1 Adam - Prokofjew}, 336.


\textsuperscript{147} Pearl Yeadon McGinnis and Marith McGinnis Willis, \textit{The Opera Singer’s Career Guide: Understanding the European Fach System} (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010), 33, 252, 288.
are no exception to the bravado and swagger needed to portray Jennen’s text within the right emotional context. Having a tenor with a lighter quality could be somewhat ineffectual in a production of Messiah when a slightly larger *Tenore lirico* gives the quality and vitality necessary to portray the text successfully. When casting soloists for a full performance of Händel’s *Messiah*, it would be optimal for the tenor and alto voices to blend well together as there is a duet in the occasionally sung Part III of the oratorio.

*Passaggi:*

The tessitura for the tenor role in Händel’s *Messiah* is relatively low, and the *Tenore lirico* very seldom sings over *secondo passaggio* into *voce piena in testa*. In the chosen excerpts of two recitatives and two arias from *Messiah*, for this document, the *lirico* only sings up to *secondo passaggio* (G₄) three times. All three times are for dramatic emphasis in the text. The most challenging phrases in this role are when the vocal line begins right below *primo passaggio* (D₄) for the *lirico*, and then leaps up into the *zona di passaggio* predominantly staying there for a lengthy time without relief of ascending to *voce piena in testa* or descending back down to speech levels. The last six measures of the recitative “Thy rebuke . . .” is a perfect example of how difficult it can be to track the proper *aggiustamento* necessary for each vowel sung in and near the *zona* of the voice (Figure 4.4). The sense of struggle this could produce from the tenor portrays the scene well.
Figure 4.4. Mm. 13-18 of “Thy rebuke hath broken His heart” from Händel’s Messiah, indicating *primo passaggio* (----) $D_4$ and *secondo passaggio* (-----) $G_4$ for *Tenore lirico* on the score.\textsuperscript{148}

The excerpts have a slightly lower *tessitura* and range than what is listed for the entire role, because of the subject matter in this section of the oratorio – the crucifixion of *Jesus*. The singing has an arduous and dark feeling during this section, and along with the constant dissonance in the accompaniment, they both beautifully convey the agony and suffering of the crucifixion. It would be rather difficult for a lighter tenor, than what

is listed for this role, to pull off the necessary weight and heroism demanded from Händel in this role.

*Copertura:*

In the first aria “Behold, and see . . .,” the climactic phrase in the aria sings up to the *secondo passaggio* for the *Tenore lirico*, by way of an ascending intervallic leap of a minor sixth on the word “behold.” This phrase can be challenging to execute if the singer has been taught to attempt rounded cover or maintaining an “open” *voce aperta* sound on the vowel [o] of “behold.” Utilizing a *copertura* approach would be a better solution, singing the vowel [ʌ] on the second syllable of “behold” will help the *Tenore lirico* execute a more *voce chiusa* result (Figure 4.5).

![Figure 4.5](image)

Figure 4.5. Mm. 9-10 of “Behold, and see if there be any sorrow” from Händel’s *Messiah*, indicating *primo passaggio* (-----) D₄ and *secondo passaggio* (-----) G₄ for *Tenore lirico* on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for *aggiustamento* and *copertura* procedure.¹⁴⁹

A phrase in “But thou didst not . . .” where *copertura* can be effectively utilized would be in mm. 12-13 of this second aria for this excerpt. At the beginning of this

phrase, the *Tenore lirico* starts below *primo passaggio* and ascends through the *zona di passaggio* (C₄-G₄) in conjunct motion on the word “Holy” up to *secondo passaggio*. The proper vowel [ə] allows him to ascend over *secondo passaggio* to *voce piena in testa* while feeling his tongue cresting up and forward for proper *copertura* (Figure 4.6).

![Figure 4.6. Mm. 12-13 of “But thou didst not leave His soul in hell” from Händel’s Messiah, indicating *primo passaggio* (-----) D₄ and *secondo passaggio* (-----) G₄ for *Tenore lirico* on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for *aggiustamento* and *copertura* procedure.](image)

Looking closer at this role in more detail, it would appear that the tenor *Fach* ideal for the tenor soloist in Händel’s *Messiah* would be *Tenore lirico*. The variations in which this oratorio can be performed seem to suggest one type over the other, but there is supportable research in this document to warrant only one type for this role (Table 4.2).

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Table 4.2. Resulting information for the tenor role in Händel’s *Messiah*.\textsuperscript{151}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>George Frideric Händel (1685-1759)</th>
<th><em>Messiah</em>, HWV 56 (1742)</th>
<th>Soloist (medium)</th>
<th>$D^#_4 - A_4$ / $G_3 - F_4$</th>
<th>Baroque Orchestra</th>
<th>Cathedral / Concert Hall</th>
<th>Tenore lirico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**The Role of Uriel in Haydn’s *Creation*, H. 21/2 (1798)**

Haydn was inspired to write a massive choral oratorio during one of his visits to England in 1791. He heard a performance of Händel’s *Messiah* at the Westminster Abby, and burst into tears exclaiming that “he is the master of us all.”\textsuperscript{152} Haydn wrote in his London Notebook how his oratorio *Creation* was to be written to inspire “the adoration and worship of the Creator” putting the listener “in a frame of mind where he is most susceptible to the kindness and omnipotence of the Creator.”\textsuperscript{153} Haydn was a prolific composer of sacred music penning many masses, but his oratorios brought him the most success as a composer during his life. With much achievement and admiration, he wrote *Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze*, Hob. 20/2 (1796) before he wrote *Creation*, and *Die Jahreszeiten* (*Seasons*), H. 21/3 (1801) after.

By reviewing the following recording of Haydn’s *Creation*, one can determine what *Fach* are used most commonly for the tenor role of Uriel. Specifically, this review

\textsuperscript{151} Similar results for other tenor *Fächer* in much of the oratorio repertoire found on pp. 128 of this document.

\textsuperscript{152} J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout and Claudia V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 8\textsuperscript{th} ed. (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2010), 545.

will examine the traditions that are commonly utilized in a modern-day performance, the quality of the tenor soloist’s sound, and also track a little of the performance history of the singer.

Professional Recording of Haydn’s Creation, H. 21/2 Examined

The recording of Haydn’s Creation to be reviewed is from 2013 by the German conductor Philipp von Steinaecker. He was the conductor of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and worked with Camerata Salzburg, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Lucerne Festival Orchestra, Orchestra del Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Orchestra della Toscana, Orchestra Mozart, New Japan Philharmonic and many others.\footnote{Fra Bernardo, “Biographies,” Liner notes, Haydn: The Creation (Fra Bernardo fb1301272), 32.} He is also known as the founder of the period instrument orchestra and choir Musica Saeculorum, which is the featured ensemble for this recording.\footnote{Ibid., 33.} Singing the tenor role is the English singer Andrew Staples, and he is considered a “regular guest at the Royal Opera House” at Covent Garden ever since his debut in 2007.\footnote{Ibid., 29.} In his young career, Staples has depicted the operatic tenor roles of Tamino in Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte, Belfiore in Mozart’s La Finta Giardiniera, Male Chorus in Britten’s The Rape of Lucretia and many other Tenore lirico roles. Kloiber, McGinnis, and Willis all list these tenor roles above as being large roles firmly placed in the Fach of Tenore lirico, which the tenor role in

\footnote{Fra Bernardo, “Biographies,” Liner notes, Haydn: The Creation (Fra Bernardo fb1301272), 32.}

\footnote{Ibid., 33.}

\footnote{Ibid., 29.}
Haydn’s *Creation* is listed as the same in this Doctoral of Musical Arts document.\(^{157,158}\) 

As a young and upcoming singer, who has a lot of performance experience under his belt, Andrew Staples is a perfect match for the tenor role in Haydn’s *Creation*.

**Excerpts from the Role of Uriel in Haydn’s Creation**

Recitative: “And God created man”

&Aria: “In native worth”

**Keys:** C Major (G Major → C Major) → C Major

**Range:** G\(_3\) – A\(_4\)

**Tessitura:** A\(_3\) – F\(_4\)

**Timbre:**

The tenor role in Haydn’s *Creation* represents the Archangel Uriel, who is known as the angel of wisdom. His name means “God is my light,” and we are perfectly introduced to his character as he dramatically announces that God has created the light and “divided the light from the darkness.”\(^{159,160}\) The solo roles, also representing archangels, play the part of the narrator as the story of creation unfolds. The role of Uriel

\(^{157}\) Rudolf Kloiber, *Handbuch der Oper: Band 1 Adam - Prokofjew*, 69, 326, 356.


\(^{159}\) Richard Webster, *Uriel: Communicating with the Archangel for Transformation & Tranquility* (Woodbury, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 2008), 1.

has to be portrayed with vocal power and strength, showing a level of authority and wisdom, matching the rather bombastic orchestration by Haydn during his solo lines. Understanding the projection challenges one could have over the typical sonority of a classical orchestra, coupled with a relatively lower *tessitura* and range for the entire role, any *Fach* lighter than a *Tenore lirico* would not be optimal in a full performance of *Creation*. In this excerpt, we hear the bravado that is necessary for this tenor role, but we also listen to a slight gentleness as Uriel announces the creation of the first woman, Eve. When casting all solo characters involved, it would be optimal that all voices blend well as there are several trios and isolated duets within Haydn’s *Creation*.

**Passaggi:**

This recitative and aria have a low *tessitura* overall, staying mostly in the *zona* and below for the *Tenore lirico*. There are only seven notes that are at secondo *passaggio* (G₄) and above in this excerpt. Haydn chooses carefully where to write high notes in the score for this aria, and does so to show a slight dualism in God’s creation of Adam and Eve. He adds high notes to be sung in *voce piena in testa* on the beat showing the creation of man and designates higher grace notes in the score (appoggiaturas and acciaccaturas) to show sweetness and gentleness symbolizing the first woman (Figure 4.7). Haydn provides a variety of approaches to the secondo *passaggio* and above by conjunct motion of the melody and also intervallic leaps of either a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> as shown in the figure above. More than half of the phrases in this aria start in the *zona* for the *Tenore lirico* (C₄-G₄), and each phrase will optimally begin with a balanced and coordinated approach with proper breath and vowel adjustment techniques. Every note
but one sung at *secondo passaggio* and above in this aria belongs to a phrase that starts in the *zona* before ascending to the higher tone.

![Musical score](image)

Figure 4.7. Mm. 37–40 (creation of Adam) and mm. 84–86 (creation of Eve) of “In native worth” from Haydn’s *Creation*, indicating *primo passaggio* (-----) D₄ and *secondo passaggio* (-------) G₄ for Tenore *lirico* on the score.¹⁶¹

Beginning these phrases with proper *chiaroscuro* tonal balance, while tracking and maintaining that balance throughout the *passaggi*, is paramount for a successful result of *bel canto* singing in this aria.

**Copertura:**

Towards the beginning of the aria, there is a phrase where Uriel needs to produce a *voce completa* sound, with some heroic bravado, as he is announcing the creation of the first man Adam (Figure 4.8). The phrase starts under the *primo passaggio*, ascends through the *zona di passaggio* up to *secondo passaggio* (G₄) on the word “King,” descending back through the *zona*, leaping down and ending below *primo passaggio*. This phrase can be difficult to negotiate if proper singing techniques are not applied.

When ascending through the *zona*, up to the *secondo passaggio* on any phrase, *aggiustamento* and *copertura* techniques are necessary to avoid an unaesthetic *voce aperta* sound. Undertrained singers try to prevent an “open sound” by rounding and covering, or they use a neutralizing approach as they attempt to negotiate their *passaggi*. Knowledgeable vocal pedagogues encourage singers to use more open neighbor vowels to transition through these “passages” with tonal balance and ease from one register to the next.

![Figure 4.8](image)

Figure 4.8. Mm. 18-23 of “In native worth” from Haydn’s *Creation*, indicating *primo passaggio* (-------) D₄ and *secondo passaggio* (-------) G₄ for *Tenore lirico* on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for *aggiustamento* and *copertura* procedure.¹⁶²

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The technique the *Tenore lirico* approaches $G_4$ on this phrase while ascending through the *zona* indicates what happens at and above *secondo passaggio*. The adjusted vowels sung to facilitate in applying the systems of *aggiustamento* and *copertura* are typed above the words in Figure 4.8.

Another phrase in the aria where *copertura* can be utilized would be in mm. 77-79 and mm. 92-94 of this aria (Figure 4.9). At the beginning of these phrases, Uriel starts the word “love” singing on the vowel [ɔ], but as he ascends over *secondo passaggio* to *voce piena in testa*, he would want to feel his tongue crest up and forward while singing the vowel [ʌ] for proper *copertura*. This approach will allow the *Tenore lirico* to feel that “gradual acoustic adjustments brought about through modifying vowels in the ascending scale . . . avoiding heavy laryngeal adjustment,” as described by Richard Miller.163

![Figure 4.9. Mm. 76-79 of “In native worth” from Haydn’s Creation, indicating primo passaggio (-----) $D_4$ and secondo passaggio (--------) $G_4$ for Tenore lirico on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for aggiustamento and copertura procedure.164](image)

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In conclusion, it would appear that the tenor Fach ideal for Uriel in Haydn’s Creation would be Tenore lirico. The range of the role is quite low for a lyric tenor voice, and any lighter tenor would have a hard time phonating regularly below the staff as often as the role of Uriel calls for in this oratorio. With a lower tessitura of F3–F4, a lighter tenor would have a hard time through the zona di passaggio, but a Tenore lirico can switch to voce piena in testa earlier to sing with ease in his higher register. The variations in which this oratorio can be performed seem to suggest one type over another, but there is supportable research in this document to warrant only one type for this role (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3. Resulting information for the tenor role Uriel in Haydn’s Creation.165

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)</th>
<th>Die Schöpfung (Creation), H. 21/2 (1798)</th>
<th>Uriel (large)</th>
<th>B♭2 – B4 / F3 – F4</th>
<th>Classical Orchestra</th>
<th>Cathedral / Concert Hall</th>
<th>Tenore lirico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This chapter has examined many of the variables necessary to assess the Fach in the roles of Evangelista in Bach’s Matthäus-Passion, tenor soloist in Händel’s Messiah and Uriel in Haydn’s Creation. When young singers, their voice teachers, and vocal coaches choose appropriate repertoire for a particular voice type, this approach to an Oratorio Fach System can serve as a guide on how to delineate Fach for roles in the oratorio repertoire. Even when a role in oratorio repertoire could be considered for

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165 Similar results for other tenor Fächer in much of the oratorio repertoire found on pp. 128 of this document.
several different Fächer, depending on what performance practices are utilized, one type is often preferred over another. After putting this Oratorio Fach System to good use, all three roles are firmly in the Tenore leggiero or Tenore lirico Fächer. As voice teachers, we have a responsibility to help choose vocal repertoire in all genres that will facilitate the development of the technique required of a classically trained singer in the twenty-first century.
CHAPTER 5. ORATORIO ROLES FOR THE TENORE LIRICO SPINTO AND TENORE DRAMATICO

The tenor who is convinced that output of power is the most important form of vocal communication suffers from the ‘spinto complex.’ With increasing frequency, conductors encourage lyric tenors to sing spinto roles and spinto tenors to sing robusto roles, assignments that are too heavy for them . . . No voice can be enlarged beyond its natural morphological boundaries, nor is there need to try to do so . . . It is not the case that a tenore spinto needs to drive his sound while the tenore leggiero relaxes his . . . If a singer attempts to produce timbre of a weightier character than suited to his Fach, vocal deterioration will occur over a period of time. The sooner he abandons the ‘spinto complex,’ the more likelihood there is that he will recover his vocal health.\(^{166}\)

- Richard Miller

For centuries the tenor voice, and the characters they portray have embodied inspirational and heroic bravura, qualities that are undeniably infectious to the masses. Since its inception, the tenor voice has been adored by millions of listeners over many centuries. John Potter, in his book about the history of this voice type, explains the evolution of the tenor voice as “a process that began slowly in the early medieval period . . . and accelerated rapidly from the eighteenth century onwards to become the complex voice of today’s opera houses and concert halls.”\(^{167}\) It was this “rapid acceleration” in the eighteenth century that evolved to what we now understand as the Tenore lirico spinto and Tenore dramatico voice types.

Richard Miller describes the spinto and dramatico tenor voices as having “the power and vocal impact to deliver the dramatic aspects of the Verdian and verismo repertories,” and he makes mention that these qualities have an advantage above and

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beyond that of the lighter Tenore lirico. Tenore lirico voices too, to which Miller alludes in the opening quote, often want to be something more than what they are, giving themselves a “spinto complex” which can take years of proper training to undo. Understanding the development of vocal technique and bel canto singing during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries helps one comprehend why vocal categories such as spinto and dramatico were ever realized.

James Stark in his book *Bel Canto: A History of Vocal Pedagogy*, explains that there if was a “single point in music history when the tradition and science of singing met, it was in the life and work of Manuel Garcia II (1805-1906).” Garcia’s extensive research on the larynx completely changed singing in the eighteenth century, ushering in a bel canto singing technique that allowed individuals to explore the magnitude of their sound naturally through adjusting the acoustics of the vocal tract. It was this approach to singing that ushered in “the three tenors of the 1830s” that changed tenor singing forever: G.B Rubini, Adolphe Nourrit, and Gilbert Duprez. It is well-documented that Duprez was the first tenor to sing a C₅ in *voce piena in testa* during a production of Rossini’s *Guillaume Tell* in 1831, thus labeling him in a new voice category of tenore di forza. Potter explains that he was able to produce these powerful chested high notes by slightly

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170 Ibid., 205.

lowering his larynx, giving him “a wider range of tone colour – far more like the voice we know today.”172 This innovative and fresh way of singing inspired Romantic and verismo composers to write dramatic music to accompany the raw and vigorous emotion that seemed to emanate from these newly discovered tenor voices.

The oratorio roles in this chapter are unquestionably assigned to the Tenore lirico spinto and Tenore drammatico Fächer, but there could be a situation where one of these arias could be assigned to a lighter Fach as an exercise exclusively in the voice studio. Often the technical abilities of a Tenore leggiero or Tenore lirico may not be ready for singing in voce piena in testa for long periods of time, and not ready to start singing oratorio or opera arias that are suitable for his voice type. In these cases, repertoire with a lower tessitura, sung exclusively with piano, can be a good technical exercise singing through the zona and up to secondo passaggio. In the opinion of this author, this type of implementation be limited to avoid confusing the young singer, thinking that they are in a heavier Fach than they actually are.

The Role of Samson in G. F. Händel’s Samson, HWV 57 (1743)

Händel was deeply inspired during and after the compositional process of his most famous oratorio Messiah. Trying to describe the way he felt during the course of writing this famous oratorio, he quoted St. Paul by saying “whether I was in the body or out of my body when I wrote it I know not.”173 Directly following his completion of

Messiah, Händel went straight to work composing Samson only days later using a libretto by Newburgh Hamilton based on Milton’s drama titled Samson Agonistes. Samson was also met with great success and has been regularly performed in concert halls after its debut in February of 1743, and while it was written under the model of being a concert work, the dramatic oratorio has often been staged as an opera.

The role of Samson and several other of Händel’s dramatic oratorio roles called for qualities of strength, expressivity, and dramaticism over the agility that was often associated with his operas before this time. Händel successfully found a tenor sound that possessed these qualities in the Englishman John Beard (c. 1717-1791). Many of the heroic leading tenor roles written by Händel during this time had Beard’s voice in mind. Winton Dean describes this pairing of composer and singer, saying that “it was probably the growing success of Beard, who had been singing Handel’s tenor parts since 1734, that suggested the revolutionary notion of a tenor Samson . . . Handel’s first great tenor part, and one of the earliest in dramatic music.” Unquestionably, the strength and bravado that Beard must have possessed in his singing voice, during the eighteenth century, when the world of the castrato was starting to lose prominence, was the inspiration for a more dramatic sound in Händel’s later dramatic oratorios.

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175 Ibid., 652.

176 Ibid., 333.
In reviewing the following recording of Handel’s Samson, one can determine what Fach are used most commonly for the title role. Specifically, this review will examine the traditions that are commonly utilized in a modern-day performance, the quality of the tenor soloist’s sound, and also track a little of the performance history of the singer.

Professional Recording of G. F. Händel’s Samson Examined

The recording of Händel’s Samson to be reviewed was recorded in 1962 (released in 2000) and led by the conductor Maurice Abravanel (1903-1993). The critically acclaimed American conductor worked in famous opera houses and concert halls all over the world but was most remembered as the conductor of the Utah Symphony Orchestra for over thirty years.\(^{177}\) Fitting, as the Utah Symphony Orchestra and Choir are both featured on this recording of Händel’s Samson. In the title role is American operatic tenor Jan Peerce (1904-1984). Born in New York City, this very famous singer sang all over the world and was on the Metropolitan Opera yearly roster for over 20 years until his eventual retirement from the stage in 1982.\(^{178}\) Peerce was famous for his portrayal of many operatic roles during his career, but he was best known for the roles of Cavaradossi in Puccini’s Tosca, Rodolfo in La bohème, Turiddu in Mascagni’s Cavalleria rusticana and Don Alvaro in Verdi’s La forza del destino. These operas were composed during the


\(^{178}\) Ibid.
Romantic period and the post-romantic verismo. Composers from this time wrote music that was often accompanied by a large orchestra. Kloiber, McGinnis, and Willis all list these tenor roles above as being large roles firmly placed in the Fach of Tenore lirico spinto, and the role of Samson in Händel’s oratorio is listed as the same in this document.\textsuperscript{179, 180, 181}

**Excerpt from the Role of Samson in G. F. Händel’s Samson, HWV 57**

Aria: “Total Eclipse”

Key: G Major

Range: E\textsubscript{3} – G\textsubscript{4}

Tessitura: F\textsubscript{3} – E\textsubscript{4}

Timbre:

The role of Samson is a good match for the Tenore lirico spinto or Tenore dramatico, because of the darker timbre and quality associated with these voice types. Any lighter Fach attempting to sing the entire role of Samson could struggle with the lower range and tessitura, as it sits lower in the voice regularly descending down to D\textsubscript{3}. The legend of Samson is found in the biblical book of Judges, and he is known as an Israelite warrior who was blessed with prodigious physical strength. The heavier and

\textsuperscript{179} Rudolf Kloiber, *Handbuch der Oper: Band 1 Adam - Prokofjew*, 286.


darker *spinto* and *dramatico* timbre for this role seem to match the physical description of Samson character well, but in this scene, he is lamenting his loss of sight and also that he is being held captive by the Philistines at the onset of the oratorio. This emotional aria is set up by Samson’s recitative where he says “my very soul in real darkness dwells!” The weight of his robust vocal sound is crucial throughout the work, reminding us of his physical strength because by the end of the oratorio we learn of his final act of strength that leads to his fateful demise.

When casting soloists for a full performance of Händel’s *Samson*, it would be optimal for the voices of Samson, Dalila, and Harapha to blend well together. Samson sings a duet with each character in Part II of the oratorio. Much of the dialogue is not sung together in these situations, but having one soloist louder than the other would not be optimal for a live performance of *Samson*.

*Passaggi:*

The *passaggi* for the *Tenore lirico spinto* are $C^\#_4$ and $F^\#_4$, and for the *Tenore dramatico* is $C_4$ and $F_4$. The role of Samson has a relatively low tessitura for any tenor voice, with more than half of the role being sung in the speaking range or below *primo passaggio* for the listed *Fächer*. Since the *tessitura* for this role is firmly established in the middle voice, it would behoove these *Fächer* to approach the role of Samson with

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natural, even and balanced timber of *si canta come si parla* derived from the International Italian School of Singing.\(^{183}\)

As discussed in Chapter 4 about the role of the Evangelista in Bach’s *Matthäus-Passion*, works Handel could also be performed in baroque pitch (A=415 Hz). This could change the range and *tessitura* of the role to a half step lower in comparison to if sung in modern pitch. Therefore, any lighter *Fach* than what is mentioned above would hardly sing up to and over *seconodo passaggio* at the top of the designated range resulting in a weaker phonation that would not match the heroic qualities needed for the role of Samson.

Tenors of this heavier and darker quality have often been taught *deckung*, or to excessively “cover” their sound, as they ascend through the *zona di passaggio* and up over the *secondo passaggi* of F\(_4\) or F\(^#\)\(_4\). This technique is taught to help them attempt smoothing over the “break” or “flip” that is perceived at *seconodo passaggio* in their voices, but evidently, *deckung* is not the best approach for the tenor who is trying to maintain the “light-dark” or chiaroscuro tonal balance in their sound. Using this “cover” method, when negotiating the ascending conjunct vocal line from G\(_3\) to G\(_4\) in m. 9 of this aria, would gradually distort the quality of the sound negatively. The phonation in this approach would become too dark, dull and unclear as they move through the *zona* to the

\(^{183}\) *Si canta come si parla* or “one sings the way one speaks,” used to circumvent unnatural adjustments of the vocal tract in singing at speech level. Richard Miller, *Solutions for Singers: Tools for Performers and Teachers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 84.
upper notes of the phrase past the \textit{secondo passaggio} into \textit{voce piena in testa} (Figure 5.1).

![Figure 5.1. Mm. 8-10 of “Total Eclipse” from Händel’s \textit{Samson}, indicating \textit{primo passaggio} (\----\) C\#\ and \textit{secondo passaggio} (\------\) F\#\ for Tenore lirico spinto on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for aggiustamento and copertura procedure.\textsuperscript{184}]

Miller explains that “the term ‘covering’ causes frequent confusion because it has too many possible connotations to convey a universally understood definition,” and this is where using the systems of aggiustamento and copertura can be helpful in achieving tonal balance and vocal security through a sung phrase like the one above.\textsuperscript{185}

\textit{Copertura:}

Keeping the \textit{chiaroscuro} balance in the sound is best executed when \textit{copertura} or light vowel modification is introduced through the \textit{passaggi} of the voice. In m. 9 of this aria, the word “dark” starts on G\textsuperscript{3} at the beginning of the phrase at normal speech levels for the tenor voice and is easily produced with the natural spoken vowel of [a] (Figure 5.1). As the phrase ascends past the \textit{primo passaggio} into the \textit{zona di passaggio} (around

\textsuperscript{184} George Frederick Handel, \textit{Samson} (London: Novello, 1903), 22-23.

\textsuperscript{185} Richard Miller, \textit{Training Tenor Voices}, 38.
C₄), Miller discusses how the vowel will slightly modify to the neighboring vowel of [ɔ] to help secure tonal balance through the *passaggi*. Miller explains that this approach “provides the necessary vowel migration in the direction of slight neutralization to ensure equalization of the mounting scale.” Directly following the word “dark” in the same phrase, is the word “amidst” set above the pitches of E₄, F♯₄ and G₄ traveling through the *secondo passaggio* for both listed *Fächer* (Figure 5.1). The neutral vowels of [ʌ] and [I] in the word “amidst” are open vowels in the vocal tract finding balance towards F₁ in the resonator. Maintaining the neutralization of these vowels will help secure the *chiaroscuro* tonal balance as the voice transition through the *secondo passaggio* into voce *piena in testa* or “male operatic head voice.”

Other phrases in this aria that Miller discusses the need for the utilization of *copertura*, at and above *secondo passaggio*, are the following words “sun,” “moon” and “stars” that are on the note F♯₄ in mm. 20 & 31 (Figure 5.2). This upper registration sensation is felt at *secondo passaggio* in the *Tenore lirico spinto* (F♯₄), and slightly above in the *Tenore drammatico* (F₄). Thus, needing some attention to detail as the tenor has intervallic leaps upward a perfect fourth or fifth mostly bypassing the *zona* altogether.

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187 Ibid.
188 Ibid., 45-7.
During the two phrases above, the high notes are not being sung for an extended period in *voce piena in testa*. Rounded cover or maintaining an “open” *voce aperta* sound on the vowels sung ([ʌ] in “sun,” [u] in “moon” and [ɑ] “stars”) at F♯₄, supposedly may seem to be an easier “physical” approach to the production of the sound. Miller calls for more of

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an “acoustical” approach, in contrast to physical, by slightly cresting the tongue forward maintaining *voce chiusa*, and following the principles of *copertura*. This approach will help the voice transition naturally, maintaining *chiaroscuro* tonal balance, without muscular force through the *zona*, at *secondo passaggio* and up into male operatic head voice. Using Miller’s approach, the heavier tenor *Fach* singing these phrases will slightly modify the vowels to the more neutral and open vowels of [ʌ] on “sun,” [U] on “moon” and [ʌ] on “stars.”

Looking closer at this role in some detail, it would appear that the tenor *Fach* ideal for the title role in Händel’s *Samson* would be *Tenore lirico spinto* or *Tenore drammatico*. The variations in which this oratorio can be performed seem to suggest one type over the other, but there is supportable research in this document to warrant only several acceptable types for this tenor role (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Resulting information for the role of Samson in Händel’s *Samson*.191

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>George Frideric Händel (1685-1759)</th>
<th>Samson, HWV 57 (1743)</th>
<th>Samson (large)</th>
<th>$D_3 - A_4$ / $F_3 - E^4$</th>
<th>Baroque Orchestra</th>
<th>Cathedral Concert Hall</th>
<th>Tenore lirico spinto / Tenore drammatico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


191 Similar results for other tenor *Fächer* in much of the oratorio repertoire found on pp. 128 of this document.
The Role of Jesus in Beethoven’s Christus am Ölberge, Op. 85 (1803)

This dramatic oratorio, based on the events that happened in the Garden of Gethsemane before Jesus was crucified, was composed by Ludwig van Beethoven in fourteen days, and is considered by some musicologists as a “hastily crafted effort to compete with Haydn as an oratorio composer.”\(^\text{192}\) Beethoven had little experience in composing large-scale vocal works with soloist and chorus before he composed Christus.\(^\text{193}\) It was received with mixed reception after its debut performance in 1803, so Beethoven slightly revised the work in 1811 hoping to have it published. After several attempts to communicate with publishers about the oratorio, Christus am Ölberge was finally published by Breitkopf & Härtel.\(^\text{194}\) It was around this time in Beethoven’s life that he also attempted his only opera Fidelio (1805) to moderate success. While this dramatic composition was Beethoven’s only attempt in the genre of oratorio, he would go on to compose tremendously successful large-scale sacred and secular vocal works with soloist and chorus: Mass in C major, Op. 86 (1803), Missa solennis, Op. 123 (1824) and Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 (1824).

In a review of the following recording of Beethoven’s Christus am Ölberge, one can determine what Fach are used most commonly for the role of Jesus. Specifically, this review will examine the traditions that are commonly utilized in a modern-day

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\(^{193}\) Ibid.

performance, the quality of the tenor soloist’s sound, and also review the performance history of the singer.

**Professional Recording of Beethoven’s *Christus am Ölberge* Examined**

The recording of Beethoven’s *Christus am Ölberge* to be reviewed was recorded in 2002 and released in 2003 (rereleased in 2013), and led by the conductor Kent Nagano (b. 1951). Nagano is celebrated for his interpretations of clarity, elegance and intelligence in the music from the Classical, Romantic and Contemporary periods, “introducing concert and opera audiences throughout the world to new and rediscovered music and offering fresh insights into established repertoire.” He is a much sought-after conductor and has worked with most of the finest orchestras in the world. On this recording, he conducts the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, where he was the Artistic Director and Chief Conductor from 2000-2006, and the Berlin Radio Choir. Singing the role of Jesus is the world-renowned Spanish operatic tenor Placido Domingo (b. 1941). Born in Madrid, Spain, this world famous singer has performed 137 different roles on the stage in opera, operetta, and zarzuela. Domingo has made many recordings of his singing, including over 100 full-length opera recordings, and has

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197 Ibid.

received twelve Grammy awards in his career. Domingo is best known for numerous roles on the operatic stage, including Erik in Wagner’s Der fliegende Holländer, Siegmund in Die Walküre, Calaf in Puccini’s Turandot and the title role in Verdi’s Othello. These operas were composed during the Romantic period, and composers from this time wrote music for large orchestras and dramatic singing. Kloiber, McGinnis, and Willis all list these tenor roles above as being large roles firmly placed in the Fach of Tenore lirico spinto, which the role of Jesus in Beethoven’s only oratorio is listed as the same in this document.

Excerpts from the Role of Jesus in Beethoven’s Christus am Ölberge

Recitative: “Jehova, du mein Vater!” & Aria: “Meine Seele ist erschüttert”

Keys: c minor (C Major → F Major → D Major) → c minor

Range: D₃ - A₄

Tessitura: F₃ – F₄

Timbre:

The Tenore lirico spinto role in Beethoven’s only oratorio is Jesus Christ. He is in the Garden of Gethsemane right before he is to be betrayed by Judas leading to his crucifixion as the “King of the Jews.” The entire oratorio is very dramatic and is

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matched by the stirring use of chromaticism and weighted orchestration that accompanies the voices throughout. In the first few decades of the nineteenth century, Beethoven “developed a style that achieved a new level of drama and expression bringing him enormous popularity” ushering in what we now understand as the Romantic era in music history in Western culture.\textsuperscript{202} It was this period that brought us many dramatic compositions by Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Frédéric Chopin, Franz Liszt, Hector Berlioz, Carl Maria von Weber, Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner to name a few. Music from this period is seldom sung by a tenor anything less than the qualities portrayed in the \textit{Tenore lirico spinto} voice.

When casting soloists for a full performance of Beethoven’s \textit{Christus am Ölberge}, it would be optimal for the voices of Jesus, Seraph, and Petrus to blend well together. Jesus sings a duet with Seraph in the middle of the oratorio, and all three characters sing a trio towards the end. Much of the text is sung together in these ensembles, so having the voices blend well together would be ideal.

\textit{Passaggi:}

With the \textit{passaggi} for the male voice in mind, as it relates to this recitative and aria in this excerpt, there are twenty-eight notes at or above secondo passaggio for the \textit{Tenore lirico spinto} (F#\textsubscript{4}), and sixty-six notes at or above secondo passaggio for the \textit{Tenore drammatico} (F\textsubscript{4}). The range and tessitura indicate that the \textit{Tenore drammatico} has to adjust sooner and more often than the \textit{spinto} as he ascends the scale, negotiating the

\textsuperscript{202} J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout and Claudia V. Palisca, \textit{A History of Western Music}, 8\textsuperscript{th} ed. (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2010), 571.
higher tessitura by an acoustical adjustment from F₄ and above. For this excerpt particularly, the dramatico would serve this music better than the spinto, as he will have a much more heroic sound singing thirty-eight more notes in voce piena in testa than the spinto. Because this recitative and aria travel in and out of the zona di passaggio for both Fächer, there will constantly be a need for acoustical adjustment (aggiustamento), but the Tenore lirico spinto would need to adjust less often than the Tenore dramatico.

Looking more closely at the score, one can see that the recitative takes both Fächer up and over secondo passaggio regularly emphasizing the emotions of the text. (Figure 5.3). Jesus is praying to God saying, “Mein Vater! O sieh! Ich leide sehr, erbarm’ dich mein!” which translates to “My father! Oh, look! I am very sorry, have mercy on me!” This climactic phrase is the final outburst before the very dramatic aria where Jesus admits that his “soul is shaken!”

The overall weight and heroic quality associated with both Fächer are necessary to portray the emotions expressed by Jesus in this recitative and aria; any lighter tenor could have some difficulty knowing where to adjust acoustically, especially if trying to force a false heroic sound that he naturally wouldn’t possess. His secondo passaggio is above the highest note of the tessitura indicated by Beethoven. The Tenore dramatico has a much clearer understanding where to change decisively at the F₄, which makes it easier to maintain voce piena in testa as he ascends through the secondo passaggio to the higher notes of the role.
Figure 5.3. Mm. 46-50 of “Jehova, du mein Vater!” from Beethoven’s *Christus am Ölberge*, indicating *primo passaggio* (------) C₄ and *secondo passaggio* (-------) F₄ for *Tenore dramatico* on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for *aggiustamento* and *copertura* procedure.²⁰³

**Copertura:**

At the end of the recitative, the climactic phrase is the one shown above (Figure 5.3). The role of Jesus, when sung by a *dramatico*, sings up to and over the *secondo*

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passaggio five times. This phrase can be challenging to execute if the singer has been taught to attempt rounded cover or maintaining an “open” voce aperta sound on the vowel [a] of “mein,” “leide” and “erbarm.” A better solution by utilizing a copertura approach would be to sing the vowel [ʌ] on these three words executing more of a voce chiusa result. Likewise on the vowel [o] for “O” and the initial [ɛ] for “erbarm’,” the tenor would negotiate the vowels [ɔ] and [ə] around secondo passaggio and above. This vowel tracking will help the dramatico avoid heavy physical adjustment, and instead feel more of an acoustical adjustment necessary by slightly modifying the vowels in and out of the zona during this ascending and descending scale.

Another vocal line in the aria “Meine Seele . . .” where copertura can be utilized is in mm. 52-55 for this excerpt. At the beginning of this phrase, the Tenore lirico spinto starts above secondo passaggio and predominantly stays in voce piena in testa until he finally descends back into the zona di passaggio and below primo passaggio. The proper vowels of [U], [ə] and [ʌ] on the words “zu dir! Deiner Macht ist Alles möglich” shown in the figure allows him to execute notes over secondo passaggio, all the while feeling his tongue crest up and forward for proper copertura technique (Figure 5.4).
Looking closer at this role in some detail, it would appear that the tenor Fach ideal for the role of Jesus in Beethoven’s Christus am Ölberge would be Tenore lirico spinto or Tenore drammatico. The variations in which this oratorio could be performed seem to suggest one type over the other, but there is supportable research in this document, especially if being sung with full orchestration, to warrant only two acceptable types for this dramatic tenor role (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Resulting information for the role of Jesus in Beethoven’s Christus am Ölberge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)</th>
<th>Christus am Ölberg, Op. 85 (1803)</th>
<th>Jesus (large)</th>
<th>D3 - A♭₄ / F3 – G₄</th>
<th>Early Romantic Orchestra</th>
<th>Cathedral/Concert Hall</th>
<th>Tenore lirico spinto / Tenore drammatico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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204 Ludwig van Beethoven, Christus am Ölberge, Klavierauszug Nr. 1415, 8.

205 Similar results for other tenor Fächer in much of the oratorio repertoire found on pp. 128 of this document.
The Tenor Role in Britten’s War Requiem, Op. 66 (1962)

Benjamin Britten was widely known as a life-long pacifist, and throughout his career composed many works that communicated his firm protestations against war of any kind. Considered by many musicologists as one of the greatest choral works of the twentieth century, Britten’s choral masterpiece War Requiem may be the most impactful statement against war probably yet made. It was composed for the rededication of the rebuilt St. Michael’s Cathedral in Coventry on May 30, 1962. It had been destroyed in bombing by Germany during WWII.\textsuperscript{206} Christoper Palmer described its reception as “an immediate critical and popular success and seemed to give people something they wanted and needed to hear.”\textsuperscript{207}

With this commission, Britten seized an opportunity to create a public anti-war display by masterfully uniting the poetry by WWI soldier Wilfred Owen with the Latin Requiem Mass.\textsuperscript{208} Perhaps his inspiration to mix the text in this manner came from the plans for the architecture of the restructured cathedral in Coventry, for which the War Requiem was commissioned. Robert J. Summer explains that “the walls of the old cathedral, bombed in WWII, were kept as a reminder of the destructive force of war, and


\textsuperscript{208} J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout and Claudia V. Palisca, \textit{A History of Western Music}, 8th ed., 927.
joined to these walls was a modern-looking church.”²⁰⁹ Likewise, Britten used the long-standing traditional setting of the Latin Requiem Mass text sung by the chorus, combining it with the contemporary English poetry of Owen who tragically died mere days before the end of the First World War.

By reviewing the following recording of Britten’s War Requiem, one can determine what Fach is most often for the tenor role. Specifically, this review will examine the traditions that are commonly utilized in a modern-day performance, the quality of the tenor soloist’s sound, and also track some of the performance history of the singer.

**Professional Recording of Britten’s War Requiem Examined**

The recording of Britten’s War Requiem to be reviewed was recorded in 1963 and was remastered and released on CD in 2013. The composer is the conductor for this recording leading the London Symphony Orchestra and Choir. Singing the tenor role is Britten’s personal and professional partner Peter Pears (1910-1986). This famous British tenor debuted and record most of Britten’s operatic and concert works. Not only was he the featured tenor in many of Britten’s compositions, but also pursued an opera career that led him to sing in opera houses and concert halls all over the world. Pears regularly sang at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden in London.²¹⁰ In his career, Pears was

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mostly known for his depiction of the operatic tenor roles written for him by Britten. Most notable was the title role in Peter Grimes, but he was also recognized for his portrayal of the roles of Hoffmann in Offenbach’s Les contes d’Hoffmann, Rodolfo in La bohème and the title role in Mozart’s Idomeneo. Kloiber, McGinnis, and Willis all list these tenor roles above as being large roles firmly placed in the Fach of Tenore lirico spinto, which the tenor role in Britten’s War Requiem is listed as the same in this document.²¹¹, ²¹², ²¹³

Excerpt from the Tenor Role in Britten's War Requiem

Aria: “Agnus Dei - One ever hangs”

Keys: b minor

Range: E₃ – G♯₄

Tessitura: F₃ – F₄

Timbre:

The tenor soloist in Britten’s oratorio represents an English soldier in the throes of war, and the soloist’s text is predominantly the English poetry of Wilfred Owen who lost his life during the first world war. The orchestration composed by Britten that accompanies this very emotional text is relatively dense and colorful with many dissonant

²¹¹ Rudolf Kloiber, Handbuch der Oper: Band 1 Adam - Prokofjew, 70, 332, 379.

²¹² Rudolf Kloiber, Handbuch der Oper: Band 2 Puccini - Zimmermann, 438.

sounds throughout the work. A full modern symphony orchestra is utilized in a performance of the *War Requiem*, and singing the Latin Requiem Mass text along with the soloists is a large chorus. Palmer describes them as those who “represent the formal, ritualized expression of mourning, and a liturgical plea for deliverance on the part of humanity-in-the-mass.”^214^ The tenor role in *War Requiem* is a good match for the *Tenore lirico spinto*, because of the darker timbre and quality associated with the voice type. If a lighter *Fach* attempted to sing the entire role of this magnitude, he could struggle with the lower range and tessitura that often descends dramatically to D3.

When casting soloists for a full performance of Britten’s *War Requiem*, it would be optimal for the tenor (English soldier) and the baritone (German soldier) voices to blend well. They sing two duets in the oratorio: “Out there . . .” in the *Dies Irae* section and “So Abram rose . . .” in the *Offertorium* section. The two soldier voices sing together quite often in these ensembles, so having soloists with bigger voices that blend well together would be most effective and impactful in a performance of this work.

*Passaggi*:

The *passaggi* for the *Tenore lirico spinto* are C♯⁴ and F♯⁴, matching well to the tenor role in Britten’s *War Requiem* which has a relatively low tessitura. A good deal of the role is sung in the speaking range or below *primo passaggio* so that Owen’s poetry is not compromised in its understanding. There are only twenty-two notes that are at *secondo passaggio* (F♯⁴) and above in this excerpt, and there are sixty-seven notes that

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are at *primo passaggio* (C♯₄) and below. Since the *tessitura* for this role is firmly established in the middle voice, it would be appropriate for this *Fach* to approach the tenor role with natural, even and balanced timber of *si canta come si parla* derived from the International Italian School of Singing.²¹⁵ Britten carefully chooses where to write high notes in the score for this aria, and does so on particular words in the text for emphasis. He adds high notes to be sung in *voce piena in testa* several different ways to show text painting, and that is predominantly through a conjunct vocal line with only a few leaps to negotiate register transitions for the *spinto*. From the onset of the aria, and in mm. 12-15, there is the beginning of a motif that he repeats three times total starting on the F♯₄ and wearily descending to F♯₃ (Figure 5.5).

²¹⁵ *Si canta come si parla* or “one sings the way one speaks,” used to circumvent unnatural adjustments of the vocal tract in singing at speech level. Richard Miller, *Solutions for Singers: Tools for Performers and Teachers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 84.

The dissensions in the poetry equal the weary and lethargic descent of the vocal line, enlightening the severity of the anti-war text that describes: “Shelled roads,” soldiers that “lost a limb” and the one who would “lay down their life” for another.\textsuperscript{217}

\textit{Copertura:}

In the aria, the phrase shown above is where the soloist, when sung by a spinto, sings at \textit{secondo passaggio} four times before descending the scale (Figure 5.5). This phrase can be challenging to execute if the singer has been taught to attempt rounded cover or maintaining an “open” voce aperta sound on the vowels \textit{[a]} and \textit{[i]} in the phrase “But His disciples” before descending to the \textit{zona} and below. The approach by the tenor voice on these motif phrases needs to be somewhat delicate, and neither of the faulty approaches mentioned above would clearly communicate the text with optimal success.

A better solution utilizing the \textit{copertura} approach would be to sing the vowel \textit{[ʌ]} on the words “But” and the second syllable of “disciples,” executing more of a voce chiusa result. Likewise on the vowel \textit{[ɪ]} for “His” and the initial syllable for “disciples,” the tenor might want to negotiate the vowels \textit{[ə]} in its place around \textit{secondo passaggio} and above. This vowel tracking will help the spinto avoid heavy physical adjustment, and instead feel more of an acoustical adjustment necessary by slightly modifying the vowels in and out of the \textit{zona} during the ascending and descending scales.

Another phrase in the aria “One ever hangs” where \textit{copertura} can be utilized would be in mm. 53-55 for this excerpt. At the beginning of the only Latin phrase of the

aria, the Tenore lirico spinto starts on F#₃ below primo passaggio. He is ascending on a conjunct vocal line through the zona di passaggio, above secondo passaggio and ending on F#₄ in voce piena in testa. Utilizing the proper vowels of [ʌ] and [ə] on the word “pacem,” allows him to execute the notes around secondo passaggio and slightly above while feeling his tongue crest up and forward for proper copertura technique (Figure 5.6).

![Figure 5.6. Mm. 53-55 of “One ever hangs” from Britten’s War Requiem, indicating primo passaggio (-----) C#₄ and secondo passaggio (-----) F#₄ for Tenore lirico spinto on the score, and showing appropriate vowels for aggiustamento and copertura procedure.]

Looking closer at the tenor role in Britten’s War Requiem, it would appear that the ideal tenor Fach would be the Tenore lirico spinto. The distinctions in which this oratorio could be performed seem to suggest one type over the other, but there is

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[218] Benjamin Britten, War Requiem, op.66, Vocal Score, 129.
supportable research in this document, to warrant only one type necessary for this emotionally charged tenor role (Table 5.3).

|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|

Table 5.3. Resulting information for the tenor role in Britten’s War Requiem.²¹⁹

This chapter has examined many of the variables necessary to assess the Fach type for the title role in Händel’s Samson, the role of Jesus in Beethoven’s Christus am Ölberge and the tenor soloist in Britten’s War Requiem. When young singers, their voice teachers, and vocal coaches are choosing appropriate repertoire for a particular voice type, this approach to an Oratorio Fach System can serve as a guide on how to delineate Fach for roles in the oratorio repertoire. Even in instances where an oratorio role can be considered appropriate for several different Fächer, most often, one specific Fach is clearly preferable over the others, concomitant with the performance practices for the project in question. After putting this Oratorio Fach System to good use, all three roles are firmly in the Tenore lirico spinto or Tenore drammatico. As voice teachers, we have a responsibility to help choose vocal repertoire in all genres that will facilitate the development of the technique required of a classically trained singer in the twenty-first century.

²¹⁹ Similar results for other tenor Fächer in much of the oratorio repertoire found on pp. 128 of this document.
CONCLUSION

Seeing tenors trying to squeeze a high chest b’ or c’’ from their ravaged throats makes you fear for an accident. . . the voice cracks and any moment you expect to see a nerve or a blood vessel burst in his throat and the poor singer collapse in suffocation on the stage.\textsuperscript{220} – Hector Berlioz

The tenor voice for many centuries has been adored and beloved by audiences around the world; however, there have been some individuals throughout the years who had harsh things to say about the sound this voice type can produce. Rossini compared Gilbert Duprez’s voice to “the squawk of a capon with its throat cut” after he sang his first full voice high C\textsuperscript{5} in Arnold’s aria from Guillaume Tell at the Paris Opéra.\textsuperscript{221} It was also Duprez who sang in the failed debut of Berlioz’s opera Benvenuto Cellini, and perhaps is the source of the quote stated above.\textsuperscript{222} As previously stated, the tenor voice evokes passion! The timbre of the tenor voice has the ability to awaken the senses and the soul of the listener, and this tone quality can cause an outpour of emotions, which might not have the same effect coming from a different voice type.

Throughout the history of music, composers have used the tenor voice for the reasons listed above, bringing the emotion and excitement to the text written in the drama that unfolds. When training young singers, a vocal pedagogue has a responsibility to


\textsuperscript{222} It is important to note that the debut of Berlioz’s opera was not successful primarily because the Parisian audiences found it too complicated. It was his first attempt at composing a large-scale opera, and he and his compositions were unfortunately closed to the Paris Opéra for the remainder of his life.
choose vocal pieces that will not only fit best for a particular voice type but will also facilitate the development of the technique required of a classical singer in the twenty-first century. Failure to identify developmental criteria when choosing appropriate repertoire for young singers can be a potential source of vocal damage and even skew a career path. If the chosen vocal repertoire does not fit the voice type, it can lead to a negative experience for both singer and pedagogue alike.

Developing classical singers learn about the European Fach System early in their careers, but often the oratorio repertoire is neglected. Since roles within oratorio lie outside of the operatic repertoire, determining how to place these roles into an unambiguous vocal Fach is important. By understanding how the European Fach System for opera is employed and how it relates to oratorio roles, studying specific passages with technical and dramatic strategies appropriate for each voice type, and reviewing several recordings focusing on the performance history of singers therein for any work, a singer can determine which Fach is most appropriate for the oratorio role in question.

Following an exploration in the current understanding of the European Fach System and the history of voice classification for the tenor voice, it has been important to delineate how the tenor voice evolved in oratorio repertoire from its beginnings as a melodic line on a musical score to an actual voice type. This overview has lent insight on how composers typically wrote oratorios with certain singers in mind, and how the expectations of singers in oratorio repertoire has changed through its history.
oratories, through its development in Paris, Vienna and also Protestant Germany by the end of the century, and its expansion in England and Germany into the eighteenth century has been vital in the process of codifying a genre-specific Fach system. A singer who uses this Oratorio Fach System to determine what repertoire is most suitable for his voice type will be well equipped to make an informed decision when choosing vocal repertoire.

Through an overview of the European Fach System, combined with a review of historically accurate performance practices, and the acoustical information in vocal pedagogy, this document has presented research designed to aid performers and pedagogues in the developed of a comparable Oratorio Fach System for the tenor voice. As a model for pedagogues and singers, this document has demonstrated a systematic approach to determine Fach for tenor oratorio roles by: explaining the European Fach System and how it relates to each oratorio tenor role, clarifying the evolution of the tenor voice in sacred music and providing a brief overview of oratorio history as it pertains to the tenor voice, and proposing an Oratorio Fach System for delineating prospective Fach for tenor roles in oratorio repertoire.

In terms of further and continued research, a guide such as this for all voice types in the oratorio literature would be a marvelous addition to our field of study in classical singing as well as a logical next step. Another avenue for potential study, for both teachers and singers, would be to analyze the Long Time Average Spectrum (LTAS) analysis with the software VoceVista for any vocal repertoire we have interest in studying. This software and type of study “can yield useful information on the
frequencies and compactness of the singer’s formant.” Applying the knowledge of the singer’s formant and how it benefits the production of sound in the singing process would further solidify proper Fach delineation. This model of thoroughly researching any role in the oratorio repertoire can act as a guide to determining which Fach a role might fall into, and facilitate preparation for accurate historical performance.

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APPENDIX 1. SYSTEM FOR DETERMINING ORATORIO FACH

Step 1: Decide on the oratorio role to be studied

Step 2: Ask the five questions - who, what, when, where, and why? (See chapter 3)

Step 3: Examine professional oratorio recordings

Step 4: Determine what the range and tessitura for the solo oratorio role

Step 5: Determine orchestration for oratorio, and the size of accompanying ensemble

Step 6: Study the score with vocal technique in mind

Step 7: Determine optimal venues for oratorio performance

Step 8: Make a determination of Fach

Step 9: If possible, cross-reference with Appendix 2 of this document
**APPENDIX 2. SOLO TENOR ORATORIO REPERTOIRE FACH CHART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Oratorio</th>
<th>Role(s) (size)</th>
<th>Range/ Tessitura</th>
<th>General Orchestration</th>
<th>Optimal Venue</th>
<th>Optimal Fach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claudio Monteverdi</td>
<td><em>Vespro della Beata Vergine</em> (1610)</td>
<td>Soloists (large)</td>
<td>D_b – A_b / A_b – F_b</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore / Tenore leggerio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)</td>
<td><em>Historia der Auferstehung Jesu Christi, SWV 50</em> (1623)</td>
<td>Evangelist (medium) / Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>D^#_3 – A_b / A_b – E_a</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra / Concent Hall</td>
<td>Tenore / Tenore leggerio</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Musicalisches Exequien</em> (German Requiem), SWV 279-281 (1637)</td>
<td>2 Soloists (medium) / Wise Men (small)</td>
<td>C_b – G_a / A_b – E_a</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra / Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggerio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674)</td>
<td><em>Historia di Jephte</em> (1648) / <em>Jonas</em> (c.1650)</td>
<td>Jepthe / Soloist (small)</td>
<td>D_b – F_b / A_b – E_a</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra / Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggerio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704)</td>
<td><em>Te Deum, H. 146</em> (c.1690)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>D_b – F_b / G_b – D_a</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra / Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggerio</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Der Tod Jesu, TWV 5:6</em> (1755)</td>
<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>C^#_3 – G_a / E_b – E_a</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra / Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggerio</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Performer</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Voice Type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)</td>
<td><em>Johannespassion</em>, BWV 245 (1724)</td>
<td>Evangelist (large)</td>
<td>C₃ – A₄ / F₃ – G₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Matthäuspassion</em>, BWV 244 (1727)</td>
<td>Evangelista (large)</td>
<td>D₃ - B♭₄ / G₁ – G₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggero / Tenore lirico</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Magnificat</em>, BWV 243 (1733)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>C⁶₃ – A₄ / F⁹₃ – F⁹₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Weihnachtsoratorium</em>, BWV 248 (1734)</td>
<td>Evangelist (medium)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / F₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Oster-Oratorium</em>, BWV 249 (1735)</td>
<td>Simon Peter (small)</td>
<td>C⁶₃ – A₄ / E₁ – G₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggero</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Mass in B minor</em>, BWV 232 (1749)</td>
<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>C⁶₃ – A₄ / F⁹₃ – F⁹₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)</td>
<td><em>La Contesa delle stagioni</em>, (1720)</td>
<td>Autunno (medium)</td>
<td>D₃ – B♭₄ / G₁ – G₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggero</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Alexander's Feast</em>, HWV 75 (1736)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / G₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td>George Frideric Händel (1685-1759)</td>
<td><em>Israel in Egypt</em>, HWV 54 (1738)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / G₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
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<td><em>Ode for St. Cecilia's Day</em>, HWV 76 (1739)</td>
<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / G₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Messiah</em>, HWV 56 (1742)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>D⁶₃ – A₄ / G₁ – F₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td><em>Samson</em>, HWV 57 (1743)</td>
<td>Samson (large)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / F₃ – E♭</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto / Tenore dramatico</td>
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<td><em>Judas Maccabaeus</em>, HWV 63 (1747)</td>
<td>Judas (large)</td>
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<td><em>Joshua</em>, HWV 64 (1748)</td>
<td>Joshua / Angel (large)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / F₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td><strong>singer type</strong></td>
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<td><strong>register</strong></td>
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<td>Johann Adolph Hasse</td>
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<td>Carl Heinrich Graun</td>
<td><em>Kommt her und schaut,</em> GraunWV B:VII:5 (1730)</td>
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<td>Baroque Orchestra</td>
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<td>Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach</td>
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<td>Soloist</td>
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<td>W.A. Mozart</td>
<td><em>Missa brevis,</em> K.192/186f (1774)</td>
<td>Soloist</td>
<td>Classical Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td>Joseph Haydn</td>
<td><em>Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze,</em> H. 20/2 (1796)</td>
<td>Soloist</td>
<td>Classical Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td><em>Die Schöpfung (Creation),</em> H. 21/2 (1798)</td>
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<td>Classical Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td><em>Missa in Angustiis,</em> “Nelson-messe” H. 22/11 (1798)</td>
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<td>Classical Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td>Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)</td>
<td><strong>Die Jahreszeiten</strong> (Seasons), H. 21/3 (1801)</td>
<td>Lucas (large)</td>
<td>B₂ – B₄ / F₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Classical Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td>Christus am Ölberg, Op. 85 (1803)</td>
<td>Jesus (large)</td>
<td>D₃ - A₅ / F₃ – G₄</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto / Tenore drammatico</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 (1824)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>F₃ – B₅ / G₁ – G₄</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Large Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Heldentenor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)</td>
<td><strong>Missa Sanctam</strong> No. 1 “Freischützmesse”, J. 224, Op. 75a (1818)</td>
<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>E₃ – F₄ / E₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stabat Mater, D. 383 (1816)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / F₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lazarus, D. 689 (1820)</td>
<td>Lazarus (large) / Nathanael (medium)</td>
<td>E₃ – A₄ / G₃ – F₃</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Petite messe solennelle (1864)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>E₃ – A₄ / G₃ – G₄</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore leggiero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Loewe (1796-1869)</td>
<td>Das Sühnopfer des neuen bundes 'Passionssoratium’ (1847)</td>
<td>Pilatus / Simon / Joseph (large)</td>
<td>A₂ – A₅ / G₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Work Description</td>
<td>Soloist</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Orchestra Type</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Tenor Style</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)</td>
<td>Messe solennelle, Op. 5 (1824)</td>
<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
<td>$F_3 - G_4$ / $G_3 - F_4$</td>
<td>Late Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Large Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Requiem: Grande Messe des Morts, Op. 5 (1837)</td>
<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>$A_{b2} - B_{b4}$ / $B_{b3} - B_{b4}$</td>
<td>Late Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Large Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
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<td>La Damnation de Faust, Op. 24 (1846)</td>
<td>Soloist (large)</td>
<td>$D_{b5} - C_{b5}$ / $G_1 - G_4$</td>
<td>Late Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Large Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Te Deum, Op. 22 (1849)</td>
<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>$F_{b}^3 - G_4$ / $G_3 - F_4$</td>
<td>Late Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Large Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L’Enfance du Christ, Op. 25 (1854)</td>
<td>Récitant / Centurion (medium)</td>
<td>$D_{b}^5 - A_4$ / $F_3 - F_4$</td>
<td>Late Romantic Orchestra</td>
<td>Cathedral / Concert Hall</td>
<td>Tenore lirico</td>
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<td>Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)</td>
<td>Paulus, Op. 36 (1836)</td>
<td>Soloist (large)</td>
<td>$D_1 - A_4$ / $F_{b}^3 - F_{b}^4$</td>
<td>Early Romantic Orchestra</td>
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<td>Symphony No. 2, Lobgesang, Op. 52 (1840)</td>
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<td>$C_3 - A_{b4}$ / $G_3 - G_4$</td>
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<td>Elijah, Op. 70 (1846)</td>
<td>Obadiah/ Ahab (medium)</td>
<td>$D_1 - A_{b4}$ / $G_1 - G_4$</td>
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<td>Christus, Op. 97 (1847)</td>
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<td>Robert Schumann (1810-1856)</td>
<td>Das Paradies und die Peri, Op. 50 (1843)</td>
<td>Soloist / Jüngling (large)</td>
<td>$C_1 - A_4$ / $F_3 - F_4$</td>
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<td>Der Rose Pilgerfahrt, Op. 112 (1851)</td>
<td>Max (medium)</td>
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<td>Szenen aus Goethes Faust, Op. 148 (1853)</td>
<td>Ariel / Pater Ecstaticus (medium)</td>
<td>$F_3 - B_{b3}$ / $G_1 - G_4$</td>
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<td>Requiem, Op. 148 (1864)</td>
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<td>$E_{b3} - F_{b4}$ / $A_1 - E_4$</td>
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<td>Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)</td>
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<td><em>Missa Solemnis</em>, WAB 29 (1854)</td>
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<td><em>Mass No. 3 “The Great,”</em> WAB 28 (1868)</td>
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<td>Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)</td>
<td><em>Oratorio de Noël</em>, Op. 12 (1858)</td>
<td>Soloist</td>
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<td><em>Le déluge</em>, Op. 45 (1875)</td>
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<td>Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)</td>
<td><em>K radosti</em> [Ode to Joy], TH 66 (1865)</td>
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<td><em>Cantata for the Opening of the Polytechnic Exhibition</em>, TH 67 (1872)</td>
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<td>Théodore Dubois (1837-1924)</td>
<td><em>Les sept paroles du Chirist</em> (1867)</td>
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<td><em>Notre-Dame de la mer</em> (1897)</td>
<td>Pierre</td>
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<td>Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)</td>
<td><em>Rinaldo</em>, Op. 50 (1869)</td>
<td>Rinaldo</td>
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<td>Franz Liszt (1811-1886)</td>
<td><em>Missa solennis, S. 9 “Gran Festival Mass”</em> (1856)</td>
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<td>Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)</td>
<td><em>Inno delle nazioni</em> (1862)</td>
<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>D₃ – B₄ / F₃ – F₄</td>
<td>Late Romantic Orchestra</td>
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<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
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<td><em>Messa da Requiem</em> (1874)</td>
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<td>Tenore dramatico</td>
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<td>Jules Massenet (1842-1912)</td>
<td><em>Marie Magdeleine</em> (1873)</td>
<td>Jésus (medium)</td>
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<td><em>La vierge</em> (1880)</td>
<td>John (medium)</td>
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<td><em>La terre promise</em> (1890)</td>
<td>Josué (small)</td>
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<td>César Franck (1822-1890)</td>
<td><em>Ruth</em> (1872)</td>
<td>Un Israélite (small)</td>
<td>G₃ – G₄ / G₃ – G₄</td>
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<td><em>Les béatitudes, M. 53</em> (1879)</td>
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<td>Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)</td>
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<td><em>Svatébní košile</em> [The Spectre’s Bride], Op. 69, B. 135 (1885)</td>
<td>Spectre (middle)</td>
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<td>Tenore lirico spinto</td>
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<td><em>Svatá Ludmila</em> [St. Ludmila], Op. 71, B. 144 (1886)</td>
<td>Bořivoj (medium)</td>
<td>D₃ – A₄ / G₁ – G₄</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Movement</td>
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<td>John Stainer (1840-1901)</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>The Daughter of Jairus</td>
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<td>D1 − A4 / G3 − G4</td>
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<td>1887</td>
<td>The Crucifixion</td>
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<td>Charles Gounod (1818-1893)</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>L'enfant prodigue, L57</td>
<td>Azael</td>
<td>D1 − A4 / G3 − F♯4</td>
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<td>Requiem</td>
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<td>F♯3 − B4 / A3 − G4</td>
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<td>Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)</td>
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<td>The Light of the World</td>
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<td>E♯3 − A♯4 / F3 − F4</td>
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<td>Heinrich von Herzogenberg (1843-1900)</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>Mors et Vita</td>
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<td>1894</td>
<td>Caractacus, Op. 35</td>
<td>Orbin</td>
<td>F³, B³ / G3 − G4</td>
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<td>Edward Elgar (1857-1934)</td>
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<td>1900</td>
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<td>F³, B³ / G3 − G4</td>
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**Key:** Late Romantic

**Performance:** Cathedral / Concert Hall

**Instruments:**
- Soloist
- Orchestra
- Choir

**Genres:**
- Late Romantic
- Tenore lirico
- Tenore leggero
- Tenore spinto
- TENORE LIRICO
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<th>Composer</th>
<th>Orchestra Type</th>
<th>Hall/Concert Hall</th>
<th>Voice Type</th>
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<td>The Dream of Gerontius, Op. 38 (1900)</td>
<td>Alexander Scriabin</td>
<td>Modern Orchestra</td>
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<td>/ Concert Hall</td>
<td>spinto</td>
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<td>The Apostles, Op. 49 (1903)</td>
<td>Richard Strauss</td>
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<td>spinto</td>
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<td>Gustav Mahler</td>
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<td>Helden-tenor</td>
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<td>Sergei Rachmaninoff</td>
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<td>Taillefer, Op. 52 (1903)</td>
<td>Arthur Honegger</td>
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<td>Zoltán Kodály</td>
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<td>Igor Stravinsky</td>
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<td>Les Noces, (1917)</td>
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<td>Der Lindberghflug</td>
<td>(1929)</td>
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<td>Das Unaufhörliche</td>
<td>(1931)</td>
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<td>Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln</td>
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<td>Elinor Remick Warren (1900-1991)</td>
<td>The Legend of King Arthur</td>
<td>(1940)</td>
<td>D#3 – B#4</td>
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<td>Frank Martin (1890-1974)</td>
<td>In Terra Pax</td>
<td>(1944)</td>
<td>F3# – B4</td>
<td>Modern</td>
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<td>Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)</td>
<td>Golgotha</td>
<td>(1945)</td>
<td>D3 – B4</td>
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<td>Saint Nicolas, Op. 42</td>
<td>(1948)</td>
<td>D3 – G#4</td>
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<td>Cantata Academica, Op. 62</td>
<td>(1960)</td>
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<td><em>Cantata misericordium</em>, Op. 69 (1963)</td>
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<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>$E_3 - A^b_4$</td>
<td>Modern Orchestra</td>
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<td>The Nose Suite, Op. 15a (1928)</td>
<td>Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)</td>
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<td><em>Peson’o lesakh: Oratoriia</em>, soč. 81 (1949)</td>
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<td>Soloist (medium)</td>
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<td>Modern Orchestra</td>
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<td>Mass in g minor (1921)</td>
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<td>Soloist (small)</td>
<td>$E_3 - A_4$</td>
<td>A capella (Double Chorus)</td>
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<td><em>Sancta Civitas</em> (1925)</td>
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<td><em>Hodie</em> (1953)</td>
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<td><em>The Passion According to St. Luke</em> (1965)</td>
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<td>Peter/Pilate (medium)</td>
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<td>Modern Orchestra</td>
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<td>Liverpool Oratorio (1991)</td>
<td>Paul McCartney (b. 1942) &amp; Carl Davis (b. 1936)</td>
<td>Shanty (medium)</td>
<td>$D^b_3 - C_3$</td>
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<td><em>Laudato si’</em> (2016)</td>
<td>Peter Reulein (b. 1966)</td>
<td>Francis of Assisi (medium)</td>
<td>$D_3 - B^b_3$</td>
<td>Modern Orchestra</td>
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</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY

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______. Requiem in C: Pour solistes (SATB), chœur (SATB) et orchestre symphonique, Barbara Grossmann, ed. Stuttgart: Carus-Verlag, 2011.


**WEBSITES**


PROFESSIONAL RECORDINGS AND LINER NOTES


