

DOI:10.29013/EJA-25-2-100-102



THE IMPORTANCE OF BAROQUE MUSIC IN THE VOCALIST'S EDUCATION (USING THE EXAMPLE OF HANDEL'S MUSIC)

*Egamberdy Tursunov*¹

¹ State conservatory of Uzbekistan

Cite: Tursunov E. (2025). *The importance of Baroque music in the vocalist's education (using the example of Handel's music)*. *European Journal of Arts* 2025, No 2. <https://doi.org/10.29013/EJA-25-2-100-102>

Abstract

Academic vocal teachers are actively searching for undeservedly forgotten, previously unreleased compositions to expand the repertoire of students. So, in academic vocal classes, motets, solo cantatas, and arias from operas by composers of the late 17th and 18th centuries are learned. In modern concert practice, Baroque music is becoming popular and beloved by the listening audience.

Keywords: *Baroque, academic vocals, arias, motets, cantatas*

Vocal musical culture, which encompasses a wide range of genre and stylistic trends in modern practice and education, cannot imagine itself without Baroque traditions. If we consider the repertoire of the leading vocalists or even the proposed concerts and festivals, then we find the obligatory inclusion of works from the Baroque era in the program. In this regard, academic vocal teachers are actively searching for undeservedly forgotten, previously unreleased compositions. Thus, motets, solo cantatas, and arias from operas by composers of the late 17th and 18th centuries appear in the repertoire of students. This is how the process of updating the repertoire takes place at the expense of the "well-forgotten old". Today, concerts of Baroque music gather huge halls of pre-classical music lovers.

Along with this, we can note the tendency of the emergence of an increasing number

of new excellent groups performing ancient music, as well as the rapidly growing release of CDs with a similar repertoire.

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) was the greatest composer whose art continues to amaze with its power, and the themes and images of the composer's works have not lost their relevance. The composer's intense dramatic art is imbued with theatrical pathos, full of vivid effects. Handel's melodic style is striking, as A.N. Serov notes, "for its ingenious reliance on the most dramatic strings of the human voice" (Rossini J., 1968, 59).

Handel's works, which summarized various European musical trends and styles of an entire era in his work, "give an almost complete, encyclopedic idea of the lush multicoloration, the complex hierarchy of large and small forms of vocal and instrumental music that had developed by the middle of the Enlightenment Century." (Taraeva G., 2004, 549).

Already at the beginning of the twentieth century, European vocal culture turned to Handel's work again, his works were performed both in opera and concert versions (almost all of Handel's operas were staged in Germany, Italy, England, the USA, Holland, Russia and other countries). Arias created by the master of the Baroque era are included as mandatory in the programs of many international music competitions and festivals. One of the most striking examples is the international J. S. Bach Competition in Leipzig. The historical significance of the composer's legacy is determined by the rapid production of sheet music, audio recordings (for example, recordings of operas, oratorios and instrumental works by Handel, released by Harmonia Mundi France, are in demand all over the world), regular large-scale festivals of Handel's music (in Hull, Karlsruhe, Göttingen, London and Maryland).

In vocal art, the Baroque era is marked by the flourishing of the Italian *bel canto* school, the standard of professional solo singing and the corresponding style of performance: singing that "touches the soul" (*"che nell'anima si sente"*) as J. R. R. Tolkien described it. Rossini (Rolland R., 1987, 26). Unlike the original interpretation of the term *bel canto*, its modern understanding has become somewhat expanded. Interestingly, J. R. R. Tolkien himself Rossini wrote about this: "Most of the famous singers of our time owe their talent primarily to happy natural data, and not to their improvement" (Rolland R., 1987, 26).

Currently, the music of the old masters is an indispensable part of the educational programs in which vocalists are educated. Unfortunately, only a few have the appropriate sound production and almost no one uses ornamentation. It is often necessary to observe the stylistically and stylistically inaccurate performance of Baroque music by modern singers. This is primarily due to the desire of teachers to solve technical problems through the seemingly vocally convenient compositions of the old masters: to help tune the vocal instrument (voice), to bring it to full muscle coordination, which, in their opinion, should have a positive effect on the correctness of vocalization and improve the functioning of the vocal apparatus. The style

of performance in this difficult process, as a rule, fades into the background or, at best, is based on the teacher's intuition. As a result, vocalists' interpretation of music often becomes featureless, expressionless, which completely contradicts the aesthetics of the Baroque. This is an argument in favor of the need for scientific research in this area.

To be a competent performer of Baroque music, you need some professional training. Abroad, in particular in Germany, Austria, Italy, France and other European countries, a whole system of teaching ancient music to both instrumentalists and vocalists has been built. Institutes, academies, and schools that educate performers of music from past centuries are actively working. As an example, let's mention the Vienna Academy of Ancient Music, the Faculty of Ancient Performance at the University of Music in Cologne, the Faculty of Ancient Performance at the Frankfurt Higher Conservatory, the Academy of Ancient Music in Brno (Czech Republic), the Faculty of Ancient Performance at the Amsterdam Royal Conservatory, and so on. In Russia, the basics of authenticity are mainly mastered by instrumentalists. So, at present, the Moscow State Conservatory has a faculty of historical performance, where students study instrumentalists. Questions of authentic performance, or as defined by J. The battle of performing "music of the past based on musical and historical data on the nature and methods of vocal and instrumental articulation, on deciphering melisms <.>, about the system of temperament and the standard of height, about the principles of implementing dynamic and agogic accents, etc." (Butt J. 2001, 59), there is practically no place in modern education.

In this regard, the importance of the problems associated with understanding the theory and practice of authentic vocal performance has increased significantly.

In our opinion, the need for young vocalists to study Baroque performance is due to several factors:

The process of becoming a highly educated vocalist is laborious. The dominant factor here is the development of students' hearing from the very first professional steps, ideas about the culture of vocal sound, about proper vocalization and improving the functioning of the

vocal apparatus. Undoubtedly, all these skills are developed over the years. Full muscle coordination requires patience and endurance. The main thing in this is the musical and artistic material, which begins the formation of a performer.

The dynamics of the modern world are increasingly pushing young performers to choose musical material of excessive complexity, which leads to voice forcing and the associated devastating consequences due to the lack of a solid vocal and technical base.

A student who resorts to forced performance distorts not only the sound quality of his voice, but also the general meaning of the work. "Many works carry a great emotional load, have a complex mood, are written in a subtle and refined, watercolor manner and require <...> a great musical and vocal culture" (Dmitriev L., 1996, 336). Therefore, in the process of selecting a repertoire, the

full range of tasks required to obtain a solid platform of musical and technical excellence should be taken into account.

The works of the Baroque period contribute to the development of logic and clarity of musical thinking, flexibility, purity of intonation, precision of position, evenness of voice, understanding the dynamics of form. The performance of arias, songs, or motets of this time requires a well-tuned voice from the singer: great elasticity of the entire vocal apparatus, a variety of breathing combined with all types of sound attack, and full exposure to timbral richness that softens harsh, "metallic" overtones. The famous vocal teacher Nicola Porpora methodically decomposed extremely difficult coloratura into simple melodic figures, the free, precise and virtuoso performance of which allowed young singers to use ornamental patterns of any complexity.

References

- Butt J. Authentic performance / J. Butt // Grove's Musical Dictionary. Moscow, 2001. – 59 p.
Dmitriev L. Fundamentals of vocal technique. – Moscow, 1996.
Rolland R. Musical and historical heritage: in the 8th issue. Issue P: Opera in the 17th century in Italy, France, Germany and England. Handel. – Moscow, 1987.
Rossini J. Selected emails. Statements. Memoirs / ed. by comp. E. Bronfin. – Leningrad, 1968.
Taraeva G. Ancient music: authentic style and interpretation. Taraeva // Vintage music today. Materials of the scientific and practical conference. – Rostov-on-Don, 2004. – P. 8–23.

submitted 29.01.2025;
accepted for publication 12.02.2025;
published 28.10.2024
© Tursunov E.
Contact: kamolidinovamokhi@gmail.com