

## **STATEMENT**

**by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gabriela Ivanova Georgieva**

Lecturer in Opera Singing at the Vocal Faculty

of NMA "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov"

Professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art

for the dissertation of

**Wang Bo**

regular doctoral student in

Doctoral Programme in Music at the

Department of Music at New Bulgarian University

on the topic:

*Vocal Interpretation of Selected Songs by Franz Schubert, Richard Strauss, Gabriel Fauré and Qing Zhu, Huang Zi, Li Yinghai: a Comparative Study from a Singer's Perspective*

Scientific supervisor: **Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova**

Vocal supervisor: **Dr. Natalia Afeyan**

**Sofia 2024**

## **1. Biographical data**

Ph.D. candidate Wang Bo obtained her Bachelor's degree in the Department of Music at the School of Arts, Mongolian University between 2007 and 2011. From 2012 to 2016, she graduated from the National Conservatory of Music "F. Venezze" in Rovigo, Italy, where she earned a master's degree in vocal chamber music. From 2017 to 2019 she studied opera singing with Professor Hidemi Kikuchi at the "Musashino Academia Musicae" in Japan. In 2020 she enrolled in the doctoral program at New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria with a major in opera singing. In the period from 2007 to 2011 she won a number of awards as a member of a choir in Mongolia. In the years she studied in Italy she performed in a number of concerts in the Venice region, participated in the choir of the Conservatory of Rovigo and finished with a solo concert for her graduation as a Master. Between 2016 and 2020 she won a number of prizes at regional competitions in China.

## **2. Contents of the thesis**

The dissertation contains a total of 98 pages and consists of an introduction, 4 chapters, a conclusion, contributions, a bibliography, as well as a list of scholarly publications on the research topic. The doctoral candidate formulates the aims and objectives of the dissertation quite clearly: 'My aim in this dissertation is to give readers from other countries an insight into the development of Chinese art songs, to highlight their uniqueness, and to stimulate interest in the rich tapestry of Chinese artistic expression'.

### **Chapter 1. Brief Introduction to Traditional Chinese Aesthetics**

In this chapter, the doctoral student summarizes the aesthetic characteristics of various aspects of traditional Chinese art, such as architecture, calligraphy, the philosophical movements

of Confucianism and Taoism, literature, fine arts, traditional Chinese music, poetry, and Buddhist culture. Examining them introduces us to the objective environment and the influence of all of them on traditional Chinese aesthetics, whose artistic concept is formed on "feeling", which evokes emotions and allows one to grasp the essence beyond external forms.

## **Chapter 2. Brief Overview of Western Historical Art Forms**

Here the doctoral student very briefly discusses the development of European music. Passing through various styles, she traces how religious music permeated secular life.

## **Chapter 3. Chinese and Western Aesthetic Comparison**

In this chapter, the doctoral student makes a comparative analysis between Chinese and Western aesthetics. The text introduces us to the similarities and differences in their development. The author concludes that "Lyrical Expression" provides a more reliable link for the integration of different cultures in music, and hence the influence of classical and romantic music on modern and contemporary Chinese music is more noticeable.

## **Chapter 4. Comparison of Western Romantic composers and contemporary Chinese composers**

This chapter is the thematic centre of the study. The author compares three pairs of composers: Schubert and Qin Zhu, Richard Strauss and Huang Zi, and Gabriel Fauré and Li Yinghai. She compares the musical aesthetic and compositional style of each pair. In this dissertation, Wang Bo shows the direct or indirect influences of Western music of the Romantic period on several generations of contemporary Chinese composers through the analysis of three Chinese art songs composed at different times. This provides a basis for students of classical

singing to experience Chinese art song and discover its beauty. By exploring Western and Chinese musical aesthetics, the PhD candidate concludes that restrained emotional expression is necessary to strike a balance between sensitivity and rationality in art.

### **3. Conclusion and Contributions**

In the conclusion, the author endeavors to summarise the issues and highlight the contributions of the text, with which I agree on all six points.

### **4. Bibliography**

Wang Bo makes use of an extensive bibliography which consists of 32 titles, among which there is literature by Italian and English authors in addition to Chinese. The abstract corresponds to the thesis.

### **5. Publications**

Wang Bo's scholarly publications are two in number. They have been published in Young Scientific Forum of Music and Dance - Proceedings 17 and 18 and are related to the topic of the dissertation.

1. COMPARING COMPOSERS: QING ZHU AND SCHUBERT - EXPLORING ART SONG EVOLUTION

2. DISCUSSING VOCAL PERFORMANCE FROM CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

In conclusion, I would like to say that this thesis is not simply a chronological and historical study of a genre or era, it is a comprehensive look at the traditions of Chinese and Western chamber vocal music. This study can guide young singers in finding their way to a stylistically correct interpretation of Chinese art songs. The work is contributory in both theoretical and applied sense. I would like to give my positive assessment and propose to the esteemed jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the professional field 8. "Vocal Interpretation of Selected Songs by Franz Schubert, Richard Strauss, Gabriel Fauré and Qing Zhu, Huang Zi, Li Yinghai: a Comparative Study from a Singer's Perspective", supervised by Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova.

Sofia

.....

3. 06. 2024 г.

Associate Professor Gabriela Georgieva