

T. Burkatska

SOME ISSUES OF VOCAL ENSEMBLE SONORITY CREATION TECHNOLOGY.

The article reveals theoretical and technological approach to a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of vocal duet that involves difficult amount of individual parties that make up the indivisible unity of music and artistic work expression: intonation ensemble, tone ensemble, dynamic ensemble, tempo-metro-rhythmic ensemble, diction-orthoepic ensemble, tessitura ensemble, texture elements ensemble. Violation of at least one of the elements leads to destruction of the ensemble sound in general.

Keywords: vocal group, vocal duo, vocal ensemble sonority, artistic integrity.

Vocal ensemble that vividly declared itself in the XIX century (especially in Russian composers' works), unfortunately, lost a bit of its individuality in XX - due to certain contradictions of its aesthetics (primarily the salon quality) with the cultural attitudes of a new era. As the essential factors of "decline" of the genre can also be considered instability of the performing compositions (Taneyev quartet for four basses, Lyubasha and Gryazniy duo with "The Tsar's Bride" by Rimsky-Korsakov, tenor and mezzo-soprano duettino from "Aleko" by Rachmaninoff, etc.), acceptance of the ensemble intermediate position in the hierarchy of vocal performance between solo and choral genres, lack of formed concert tradition in vocal ensemble performance of entire concert programs, and, finally, problems with repertoire. So, "having existed for some time on gained intonation and figurative base, vocal ensemble gave way to pop genres within the new framework of Soviet pop culture" [1, c. 194]. However, in the last third of XX - beginning of XXI centuries genre of vocal ensemble of academic tradition shows the apparent revival in its original sense, with the corresponding impact of new forms of the era – theatrelization, genre synthesis, pop-sphere techniques assimilation. In the training programs of vocal faculties in Ukrainian music academies chamber-class vocal ensemble took the great place – preserving the influence of great examples of the classics on their style, especially J. Carissimi, A. Chesti, J. Habussi, Kh.V. Hlyua, G.F Handel, J.S Bach, A. Mozart, G. Donizetti, J. Rossini, V. Bellini, F. Durante, O. Nicolai, A. Dargomyzhski, O. Borodin, P. Tchaikovsky, M. Rimsky-Korsakov, S. Taneyev, O. Hrechaninov ensembles, and, at the same time, an active upgrade repertoire, stylistic, technical and technological aspects. In terms of actualization of the said genre, development of vocal ensemble sonority creation technology gaining importance, what is the subject of study of this article. The author offers a number of her own observations and generalizations in the stated sphere of her performing and teaching experience (as a part of Odessa Philharmonic vocal duet "Dolya" and the Odessa National Music Academy named

after A.V. Nezhdanova).

Dynamic and timbre ratio in sounding between individual voices shall be taken as the basis of formation of vocal ensemble sounding. Thus, the basis of artistic creation sound is based on two principles: *dynamic* and *timbre*. Of course, high-rise organization, intonation cleanliness in coordination of partners is the foundation of vocal ensemble sound. As a result, timbre and dynamic balance of voices forms the sonority balance between the strength and timbres of voices sound. In this case vocal ensemble represents a dynamic and timbre artistically justified ratio between voices sonority. Timbre correlation between voices is often based on the principle of contrast in timbres. The less those voices images related in the works between each other, the truer, more natural timbre ratio between voices is.

Tessitura conditions of the ensemble sounding also create a great influence on the formation of sonority. Ratio in the sonority of tessitura conditions has many different forms – as many as the number of music, choral and ensemble works. The entire evenness of tessitura conditions in performance is only a special case of all such phenomena. Melodious voice has dynamic capabilities that are related to tessitura conditions. The higher tessitura is, the higher dynamic capabilities are.

With equal tessitura conditions voices have the same dynamic features, and the more varied registers are used, the richer their palette is. Within a relatively high tessitura, ensemble with sufficient vocal technique and vocal culture has dynamic capabilities from pianissimo to fortissimo, within the conditions of middle tessitura – from pianissimo to forte, and within the low tessitura – maximum from pianissimo to mezzo forte. When using different tessitura conditions, new dynamic states, that create new forms of dynamic and partially timbre ensembles, appear. Masterly performance is evident in the fact that between the voices is set such dynamic and timbre ratio in which there arises a new generation or type of ensemble that gives a new characteristic shape of ensemble sonority, new coloristic quality, stemming from creatively-performing vocalists plan.

When choosing a repertoire we must consider that in the works of composers the estimated range is taken into account, but specific artistic capabilities of voices that compose ensemble are not always calculated. Use of tessitura conditions in ensemble sounding has many species that occur on the basis of compositional techniques that were used by the composer. To determine all possible comparisons and diversity of these kinds of comparisons, typification of ensemble kinds based on tessitura conditions ratio is necessary.

Ensemble quality problem depending on the *texture* of a musical work considering its stylistic parameters is an important aspect in the formation of the vocal ensemble sonority. All this makes the special ensemble forms that are associated with the prospect of sonority that arises from a comparison of different value and functionality of music and thematic elements and sets specific ensemble principles which have their own laws. The main general historical styles of writing (textural compositions) are: homophonic-harmonic, polyphonic, mixed and, as a special form of presentation, folk-song style that is similar to so-called imitative contrast polyphony.

Homophonic-harmonic style in the works for vocal duo basically has two forms of presentation: a) melody with accompaniment (the melody can take place in each of the duo's voices) and b) chord presentation which has no clearly expressed melodic origin, composer thinks in harmonic images-intervals that in the performance by the duo form harmony with accompaniment.

In the first case the voice that sets out thematic material is some highlighted to the overall sonority, therefore, from the ensemble side in such works the principle of constant dynamic partially timbre prospect is formed. Ratio of sonority remains unchanged. Foreground is the theme, the rest is formed by the background. Dynamic index is also small and permanent.

Otherwise thematic function is performed by harmonic image formation. Dynamic index ratio in sonority between voices is zero. There arises a complete dynamic equilibrium: voices should not dominate each other but create a single, indivisible whole vocal-ensemble sounding. All of the above, both horizontally and vertically, forms a single plan.

In works of this kind, the vocal ensemble takes the form of a relatively complete (the first case) or complete (the second case) dynamic equilibrium.

The voices value is changing with the development of the musical fabric, and the prospect of sonority is changing, too. Light and shade are allegedly swaying. Duet sonority ensemble represents a complex, diverse picture.

It is also necessary to focus on *sonority vocal duo ratios* and *instrumental ensemble* accompanying this singing. Musical score of such works represents, in our opinion, the only artistic integrity, and it is important sort out relative importance of vocal and instrumental parts. Let's consider the most typical cases of the performance ensemble of such works.

1. Vocal sonority dominates the instrumental one. Such ratio is one of the most

common in practice in the performance of vocal duets. Most often, the composer executes his plan presenting the forefront sonority to singers and moves instrumental ensemble sounding into the background. In this case, the direction of performance, which solves the problem of right art sound, dynamic and timbre prospects depend on performers (and in educational practice – on the teacher). It is necessary to find an organic ratio of the sonority of vocal and instrumental parts of the musical work.

2. The vocal and instrumental parts of musical score have the same or relatively equal importance. In this form there can be two options of the ensemble sonority: a) instrumental part of the work is duplicated by singing voices (while performing, priority in singing sonority is necessary – the pronounced text should be clearly heard); b) material other than what is transmitted in vocal parties is taught in instrumental musical score – thus both materials have the same music and thematic meaning (in such works music material matching requires the ability not to lose a total singing voices sonority and clearly stress all the voices in the performance in musical score).

3. Instrumental part of musical score dominates the vocal-duet one. This example represents a relatively rare phenomenon than previous ones. All the most significant in the musical and thematic respect is taught in the instrumental part of musical score, vocal duet forms kind of vocal background or, that often occurs, is particularly instrumental and vocal group of the whole music score, it's a special timbre part, a special "instrument".

But it should be noted that listed, due to the texture, problems of ensemble vocal duets and instrumental sound should be solved in the context of a particular, specific work by close studying of its structure and figurative meaning.

Among specific issues of vocal duets can be mentioned, in particular, *sound-altitude cleanliness* in dynamic and timbre ensemble, careful attitude to the purity of intervals performed. From experience we know that singers who have a pure tone but never sang in a duet can sing purely, with no ability to form an ensemble with a partner and adjust the power of their sound in the overall sounding. In this case we say that the duo sounds unevenly and has no integrity of artistic sounding. At the same time the intoning is relatively pure, the singers keep the line. Theoretically the formation is possible without the ensemble. It often happens between two soloists each of which by itself has a good artistic side of music. But in a duet piece of music will not be artistically full.

At the same time we can speak about an ensemble in a duet only when each singer's

voice is balanced with that of a partner not only in timbre and dynamic, but also in intonation. It's fair to say that, first, the ensemble is impossible without a full intonation merger, and second – no vocal duo is possible without the formation, which is an integral part of the ensemble.

It is necessary to take into account two extremely important attributes of a high artistic level of the vocal duo: *tempo-metro-rhythmic* and specific to the vocal *orthoepic*. Thus, the existence of vocal ensemble in a duet is impossible in the presence of poor rhythm of at least one of the partners; tempo, ahohick differences in movement. Also it is impossible to create a vocal ensemble if no common diction-orthoepy methods are used (orthoepy – “a set of rules that establish the same pronunciation which conforms to the pronunciation standards in a given language” [2]). The last aspect requires special attention, because good diction promotes clear sound for each vowel and consonant individually, and the words and phrases in general. One should remember that singing orthoepy is different from that of language. This difference is determined by the conditions of singing formation of vowels, specific musical notation, and finally singing reduction features (details - [4]).

The main thing that appears in the vocal ensemble sound is a requirement of perception of all components of the ensemble work – timbre, dynamics, textures, texture layers - in terms of *artistic integrity*. The indicated factors of the artistic whole can be considered in isolation from one another only conditionally, “theoretically”, that it is possible and often takes place when studying the ensemble technology. Therefore, this requirement falls within the scope of performing of musical thinking and should be crucial for modern singer-ensemble.

In the vocal ensemble work it's especially important not just to keep in mind that each element is only part of the whole, but also to bring this correctly to the students' consciousness. Between all the elements that form the ensemble there is indivisible and mutual relationship in which each component carries all the features and characteristics of the whole.

Thus, the theoretical and technological approach to a holistic understanding of the phenomenon vocal duet involves difficult amount of individual aspects that compose indivisible unity of music and artistic work expression: intonation ensemble, tone ensemble, dynamic ensemble, tempo-metro-rhythmic ensemble, diction-orthoepic ensemble, tessitura ensemble, texture elements ensemble. Violation of at least one of the elements leads to

destruction of the ensemble sound in general. Such fractal principle of executive thinking contributes directly to the quality of ensemble sonority.

The work with the vocal duo stands out a necessity of detailed review and use of special methods of teaching and performing work on each side of the ensemble. Intonation certainty vocal duo sounding is more important than solo sounding. This assertion is rightful because of more sensitive hearing relation to intonation and harmonic sounding than to melodic and intonation.

Timbre fusion or contrast in the sound of vocal duo voices requires focused work of each voice on timbre shades. The dynamics of sound is one of the important directions of performance expression, which in duo sounding takes the value of a polyphonic tool. Metro-rhythmic in the ensemble plays a unifying role which creates the effect of “synchronous beating hearts”. Articulation toward mastery of uniform diction-orthoepy methods creates the unity in pronunciation of words and defines a logical reading of the text.

So, in vocal and whole ensemble one can distinguish a triad of complex means of expression - vocal-technical, musical and verbal. Their equal cooperation and unity make one of the most important tasks of the performers-singers in the work on piece of music. However, such “equality of the three systems means their equal capabilities provided since the beginning of musical thinking present in the priority role of musical origins” [3, p. 1]. But it emphasizes the importance of vocal-technical complex which has great potential along with musical and verbal.

The foreseeable result of interaction between three mentioned complexes of means of expression is the organic unity of vocal applications of a work, if dominance of any complex is possible, which is due to stylistic or genre characteristics of a particular work.

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