

2.5 MESSA DI VOCE EXERCISES (PELLEGRINI CELONI)

Adagio

Largo

2.6 ATTACKING THE SOUND

Among the various manners of intoning the sound that were in use at the time, Caccini tells us that he prefers that of emitting a note piano and then increasing its dynamics. This was in preference to the practice of approaching the note from the third below.

Bovicelli points out that “to give grace to the voice, either at the beginning or wherever it is” the singer must “commence a third or a fourth below”. Rognoni reiterates this principle.

BOVICELLI

bad example good examples

De - - us De - - - - us De - - - - us.

ROGNONI

CHAPTER 5 EMBELLISHMENTS

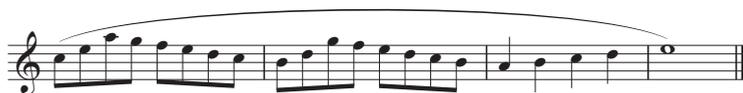
5.1 PORTAMENTO DI VOCE

Portamento is an artifice that all singers need to practise and, as with the *messa di voce*, breath control is of central importance. Mancini defines portamento as follows:

passing from one note to another, joining (*legando*) the voice with perfect proportion and union, both ascending and descending. The more beautiful and more perfect will be the singing the less the producer of the sound interrupts it to take a breath, since there must be an even and limpid graduation, which must govern and join (*legare*) the sound, in passing from one note to another.



Portamento can be perfectly performed the moment the registers are merged. Mancini advises the teacher to exercise the pupil in a solfeggio of “white notes”, and gives rules relative to the use of taking the breath: “In performing this solfeggio exercise it must be the pupil who abstains from taking breath in the notes that go up by grades or by intervals, but he should only do it on notes that descend”. The voice, Mancini adds, is “sluggish in going up, and agile coming down, so it is essential to fix this system in this study only for voices that go up, which are more suitable for unifying and blending the voice”. According to the MCP, portamento is performed in two different ways. The first way is “when many notes of the same value are bound together, neighbouring notes or otherwise”. In this case the sounds are “articulated distinctly without being detached” and the singer must give “greater force in the ascending notes, and must diminish the force in the descending notes”.



The second way of performing portamento is “between two sounds which form an interval greater or lesser in distance, and which proceed only by distant grades”.



This is true portamento and the voice must slide “readily with a very light slur which starts at the end of the first of the two notes, advancing, ahead of time, to the following note”. Portamento is used in *cantabile* pieces, in *adagio* and *largo* sections, at moments when the voice sings continuous, sustained and with expression.

1

less voice spirited excla. livelier excla.

Deh, deh, — do-ve son fug - gi - ti, Deh, do-ve son spa - ri -

7

excla. excla. T

- ti Gl'oc - chi de qua - li ai ra - i Io son ce - ner o - ma - -

13

excla. Without strict measure, almost talking in harmony with the piece above T

- i? Au - re, au-re di-vi-ne, Ch'er - ra-te pe-re-gri-ne In que-sta par-t'e in quel -

19

excla. excla. with

- la, Deh, re - ca - te no-vel - la Del-l'al-ma lu-ce lo - ro, Au - re,

9.5 AGILITY EXERCISES (PELLEGRINI CELONI)

For Pellegrini Celoni, agility is useful in “unfolding the meaning of the words [...] anger, fury, the storm, a flight, a whirlwind, a flash of lightning or clap of thunder, a frenzy or transport and so forth”. Agility, she argues, is one of the singer’s greatest gifts, and the teacher must teach it gradually, step by step, in order to go from “little” to “much”, from *allegro* to *prestissimo*. Typically, these exercises are based on ascending and descending progressions in the baroque manner, trills and *gruppetto* (turns) written out in full, which develop agility and ease in producing the top notes. They are to be performed at moderate speed, and only when the registers are more evenly unified should the speed be increased.

Allegro

1

The musical score consists of five systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system is marked 'Allegro' and '1'. The exercises feature ascending and descending eighth-note patterns, trills, and gruppetto ornaments. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 below notes. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

Andante sostenuto

1

8

15

21

28

p