

Montgomery, Cheri. *Phonetic Transcription for Lyric Diction.*

Nashville, TN: S.T.M. Publishers, 2016. Paper, 259 pp., \$49.50. ISBN 978-0-9975578-1-7 www.stmpublishers.com

Cheri Montgomery has become the guru of lyric diction for singers. She has written a veritable library of resources; her most recent endeavor is a two-part series that has phonetic transcription as its focus. The first textbook, *Phonetic Readings for Lyric Diction* (Nashville: S.T.M. Publishers, 2015; reviewed in *Journal of Singing* 72, no. 2 [November/December 2015]: 248–249) is an enunciation and transcription workbook that draws upon words commonly found in the art song repertoire in English, Italian, German, French, and Latin. This volume, which completes the series intended for use in a two-semester sequence of study, is a graded method of phonetic transcription. Words are drawn from those commonly occurring in song repertoire in Italian, German, French, and Latin.

The text is broadly divided into four sections comprised of twenty-eight units. Italian and German are covered in seven units each, and Latin consists

of three units. The remaining eleven chapters are devoted to French. Each language is introduced with a discussion of relevant terms; for instance, the overview of French includes definitions for *langue courant* (the vernacular) and vocalic harmonization (the alteration of a vowel sound to blend with a consecutive syllable or word). The author identifies the dictionaries and diction texts used in formulating the rules, and summarizes the characteristic of each language. Montgomery methodically presents the sounds for each language with a summary of rules for transcription, guidance in the applying the rules, and transcriptions of examples drawn from the literature. Corresponding exercises are included for each sound; in the instructor's text, the answer keys are amassed at the end of the book.

The practical nature of this text is outstanding. The author elucidates both the basic principles and finer points of diction, from the difference between the *ich* Laut and *ach* Laut in German to the nuances of the schwa in French. Even a cursory glance through the transcription exercises verify that the examples are drawn from the literature; those familiar with song literature will recognize the lines "Vor Liebe und Liebesweh" and "Le spectre de la rose." Montgomery provides detailed explanations as well as exercises for practice. The book, like the others written by this author, is designed for use in conjunction with standard diction manuals. The volume is eminently useful, and instructors who teach lyric diction courses should explore both this text and its companion book.

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