

Künstlerreise

[An Artist's Journey]

Welcome to the Journey of an Artist

As with any journey we start here at the beginning, wide-eyed and optimistic. As we learn more things we become increasingly aware of our own shortcomings and faults, which brings us to the central conflict of this story, self-doubt and what one does to overcome this. This tale is as old as time existing in different forms such as Beowulf in Old English, Perseus in Greek Mythology, etc. This universal theme of overcoming personal doubts and emerging triumphant is something I hope resonates with everyone tonight.

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Novice

A novice can be defined as someone who is new to a situation. This is where we begin our journey as an artist. As with anyone who is new to a situation, they are filled with newfound curiosity and passion.

A fitting start would be an ode to music: **Orpheus with his Lute** by **Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)**. Vaughan Williams set Shakespeare's text detailing the powers of Orpheus, how it helps him affect the very Nature around him.

This "ode to music" continues on with **Ständchen** by **Erich Korngold (1897-1957)**. Korngold was a child prodigy born in Austria. Where he is most known would be in Hollywood as one of the first few film composers. He wrote music for films such as Reinhardt's "A midsummer night's dream". Ständchen is part of Korngold's "Six simple Songs", wherein he combined the simple structure of earlier 19th century lieder with more complex harmonies and progressions.

The new-found innocence present amongst novices can be best shown in **Gerald Finzi's "Rhapsody"**. Finzi (1901-1956) was an English composer best known for his choral compositions. Rhapsody is the 2nd movement of his solo cantata with orchestra, *Dies Natalis*, where he describes the childlike wonder of being born.

Ständchen by *Korngold*

Auf die Dächer zwischen blassen
Wolken scheint der Mond herfür,
Ein Student dort auf den Gassen
Singt vor seiner Liebsten Tür.

From pallid clouds the moon
Looks out across the roofs,
There in the street a student sings
Before his sweetheart's door.

Und die Brunnen rauschen wieder
Durch die stille Einsamkeit,
Und der Wald vom Berge nieder,
Wie in alter, schöner Zeit.

And again the fountains murmur
In the silent loneliness,
And the woods on the mountain
Murmur, as in good old times.

So in meinen jungen Tagen
Hab ich manche Sommernacht
Auch die Laute hier geschlagen
Und manch lust'ges Lied erdacht.

Likewise in my young days,
Often on a summer's night
I too plucked my lute here,
And composed some merry songs.

Aber von der stillen Schwelle
Trugen sie mein Lieb zur Ruh,
Und du, fröhlicher Geselle,
Singe, sing nur immer zu!

But from that silent threshold
My love's been taken to rest.
And you, my blithe friend,
Sing on, just sing on!

Apprentice

The young novice has graduated to become an apprentice. Now he puts in the hard work and dedication into his craft in order to be the best he can be.

This work ethic can be seen in **Lied eines Schmiedes (The Blacksmith's Song)** by **Schumann**. The steady ostinato represents the striking of hammers and steel as the blacksmith forges a new horseshoe for the small steed.

The theme of work continues with **Brahms' Von ewiger Liebe**. Brahms (1833-1897) shows here a different side of work. It talks of a love so strong, it has been forged like steel and iron. It shows us the fruits of our toil and labour, should we continue working hard.

In his pursuit of excellence, our young apprentice wanders out into the greater unknown where his skills will be tested and strengthened. This spirit of wandering is best seen in **Schubert's Das Wandern and Wohin!** Franz Schubert (1797-1828) was an Austrian composer who is best known for his lieder. In his short life, he has composed over 600 songs, making him an important figure in vocal music.

Lied eines Schmiedes by *Schumann*

Fein Rösslein, ich
Beschlage dich,
Sei frisch und fromm,
Und wieder komm!

Fine little steed,
You'll soon be shod,
Be frisky and good,
And come back again!

Trag deinen Herrn
Stets treu dem Stern,
Der seiner Bahn
Hell glänzt voran!

Carry your master
Ever true to the star
That shines brightly
On his path!

Trag auf dem Ritt
Mit jedem Tritt
Den Reiter du
Dem Himmel zu!

With each step
As you go,
Carry your rider
Nearer heaven!

Nun Rösslein, ich
Beschlage dich,
Sei frisch und fromm,
Und wieder komm!

There, little steed,
Now you're shod,
Be frisky and good,
And come back again!

Von ewiger Liebe by *Brahms*

Dunkel, wie dunkel in Wald und in Feld!
Abend schon ist es, nun schweiget die Welt.

Dark, how dark in forest and field!
Evening already, and the world is silent.

Nirgend noch Licht und nirgend noch Rauch,
Ja, und die Lerche sie schweiget nun auch.

Nowhere a light and nowhere smoke,
And even the lark is silent now too.

Kommt aus dem Dorfe der Bursche heraus,
Gibt das Geleit der Geliebten nach Haus,

Out of the village there comes a lad,
Escorting his sweetheart home,

Führt sie am Weidengebüsche vorbei,
Redet so viel und so mancherlei:

He leads her past the willow-copse,
Talking so much and of so many things:

„Leidest du Schmach und betrübest du dich,
Leidest du Schmach von andern um mich,

‘If you suffer sorrow and suffer shame,
Shame for what others think of me,

Werde die Liebe getrennt so geschwind,
Schnell wie wir früher vereinigt sind.

Then let our love be severed as swiftly,
As swiftly as once we two were plighted.

Von ewiger Liebe by *Brahms*

Scheide mit Regen und scheide mit Wind,
Schnell wie wir früher vereinigt sind.“

Let us depart in rain and depart in wind,
As swiftly as once we two were plighted.’

Spricht das Mägdelein, Mägdelein spricht:
„Unsere Liebe sie trennet sich nicht!

The girl speaks, the girl says:
‘Our love cannot be severed!

Fest ist der Stahl und das Eisen gar sehr,
Unsere Liebe ist fester noch mehr.

Steel is strong, and so is iron,
Our love is even stronger still:

Eisen und Stahl, man schmiedet sie um,
Unsere Liebe, wer wandelt sie um?

Iron and steel can both be reforged,
But our love, who shall change it?

Eisen und Stahl, sie können zergehn,
Unsere Liebe muß ewig bestehn!“

Iron and steel can be melted down,
Our love must endure for ever!”

Das Wandern by *Schubert*

Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust,
Das Wandern!
Das muss ein schlechter Müller sein,
Dem niemals fiel das Wandern ein,
Das Wandern

To wander is the miller's delight;
to wander!
A poor miller he must be
who never thought of wandering,
of wandering.

Vom Wasser haben wir's gelernt,
Vom Wasser!
Das hat nicht Rast bei Tag und Nacht,
Ist stets auf Wandschaft bedacht,
Das Wasser.

We have learnt it from the water,
from the water!
It never rests, by day or night,
but is always intent on wandering,
the water.

Das sehn wir auch den Rädern ab,
Den Rädern!
Die gar nicht gerne stille stehn,
Die sich mein Tag nicht müde gehn,
Die Räder.

We can see it in the wheels too,
the wheels!
They never care to stand still
but turn tirelessly the whole day long,
the wheels.

Das Wandern by *Schubert*

Die Steine selbst, so schwer sie sind,
Die Steine!
Sie tanzen mit den muntern Reihn
Und wollen gar noch schneller sein,
Die Steine.

The stones themselves, heavy as they are,
the stones!
They join in the merry dance and seek to
move still faster,
the stones.

O Wandern, Wandern, meine Lust,
O Wandern!
Herr Meister und Frau Meisterin,
Lasst mich in Frieden weiter ziehn
Und wandern.

O wandering, my delight,
O wandering!
Master and mistress,
let me go my way in peace,
and wander.

Wohin! by Schubert

Ich hört' ein Bächlein rauschen
Wohl aus dem Felsenquell,
Hinab zum Tale rauschen
So frisch und wunderhell.

I heard a little brook babbling
from its rocky source,
babbling down to the valley,
so bright, so wondrously clear.

Ich weiss nicht, wie mir wurde,
Nicht, wer den Rat mir gab,
Ich musste auch hinunter
Mit meinem Wanderstab.

I know not what came over me,
nor who prompted me,
but I too had to go down
with my wanderer's staff.

Hinunter und immer weiter
Und immer dem Bache nach,
Und immer heller rauschte,
Und immer heller der Bach.

Down and ever onwards,
always following the brook
as it babbled ever brighter
and ever clearer.

Ist das denn meine Strasse?
O Bächlein, sprich, wohin?
Du hast mit deinem Rauschen
Mir ganz berauscht den Sinn.

Is this, then, my path?
O brook, say where it leads.
With your babbling
you have quite befuddled my mind.

Wohin! by *Schubert*

Was sag' ich denn vom Rauschen?

Why do I speak of babbling?

Das kann kein Rauschen sein:

That is no babbling.

Es singen wohl die Nixen

It is the water nymphs singing

Tief unten ihren Reihn.

as they dance their round far below.

Lass singen, Gesell, lass rauschen,

Let them sing, my friend; let the brook babble

Und wandre fröhlich nach!

and follow it cheerfully.

Es gehn ja Mühlenräder

For mill-wheels turn

In jedem klaren Bach.

in every clear brook.

Journeyman

As with everyone, the young journeyman feels the tumult of life. As he leaves the comfort of his home, he is haunted by his own insecurities and doubts. Will he make it? Does he have the skills to continue this journey?

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) opens this chapter in our journey with his song **Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder**. Part of his Rückert Lieder, this song illustrates doubt through the tumultuous piano part. The ever moving left hand paints a busy picture, reflecting the business of the bees he references in the 2nd stanza.

Talk of journeying is not complete without mentioning **Schubert's** Winterreise. Here we see **Rast and Frühlingstraum**. Here we see a big difference between the wandering done before compared to now. The minor key both pieces are in paint a bleak atmosphere reflecting the weary state our protagonist is in.

Tired of his wandering our protagonist succumbs to his despair in **Faure's Dans la Foret de Septembre**. This resignation to his own situation is presented in the melody line. Instead of passionate cries for help the range is contained to represent our protagonist's acceptance of his fate.

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder by *Mahler*

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder!

Do not look into my songs!

Meine Augen schlag' ich nieder,

I lower my gaze,

Wie ertappt auf böser Tat.

As if caught in the act.

Selber darf ich nicht getrauen,

I dare not even trust myself

Ihrem Wachsen zuzuschauen.

To watch them growing.

Deine Neugier ist Verrat!

Your curiosity is treason.

Bienen, wenn sie Zellen bauen,

Bees, when they build cells,

Lassen auch nicht zu sich schauen,

Let no one watch either,

Schauen selbst auch nicht zu.

And do not even watch themselves.

Wenn die reichen Honigwaben

When the rich honeycombs

Sie zu Tag gefördert haben,

Have been brought to daylight,

Dann vor allen nasche du!

You shall be the first to taste!

Rast by *Schubert*

Nun merk' ich erst, wie müd' ich bin,
Da ich zur Ruh' mich lege;
Das Wandern hielt mich munter hin
Auf unwirtbarem Wege.

Die Füße frugen nicht nach Rast,
Es war zu kalt zum Stehen,
Der Rücken fühlte keine Last,
Der Sturm half fort mich wehen.

In eines Köhlers engem Haus
Hab' Obdach ich gefunden;
Doch meine Glieder ruhn nicht aus:
So brennen ihre Wunden.

Auch du, mein Herz, in Kampf und Sturm
So wild und so verwegen,
Fühlst in der Still' erst deinen Wurm
Mit heissem Stich sich regen!

Only now, as I lie down to rest,
do I notice how tired I am.
Walking kept me cheerful
on the inhospitable road.

My feet did not seek rest;
it was too cold to stand still.
My back felt no burden;
the storm helped to blow me onwards.

In a charcoal-burner's cramped cottage I found shelter.
But my limbs cannot rest,
their wounds burn so.

You too, my heart, so wild and daring
in battle and tempest;
in this calm you now feel the stirring of your serpent,
with its fierce sting.

Frühlingstraum by *Schubert*

Ich träumte von bunten Blumen,
So wie sie wohl blühen im Mai,
Ich träumte von grünen Wiesen,
Von lustigem Vogelgeschrei.

I dreamt of bright flowers
that blossom in May;
I dreamt of green meadows
and merry bird-calls.

Und als die Hähne krähten,
Da ward mein Auge wach;
Da war es kalt und finster,
Es schrieten die Raben vom Dach.

And when the cocks crowed
my eyes awoke:
it was cold and dark,
ravens cawed from the roof.

Doch an den Fensterscheiben
Wer malte die Blätter da?
Ihr lacht wohl über den Träumer,
Der Blumen im Winter sah?

But there, on the window panes,
who had painted the leaves?
Are you laughing at the dreamer
who saw flowers in winter?

Ich träumte von Lieb' um Liebe,
Von einer schönen Maid,
Von Herzen und von Küssen,
Von Wonne und Seligkeit.

I dreamt of mutual love,
of a lovely maiden,
of embracing and kissing,
of joy and rapture.

Frühlingstraum by *Schubert*

Und als die Hähne krähten,

Da ward mein Herze wach;

Nun sitz' ich hier alleine

Und denke dem Traume nach.

Die Augen schliess' ich wieder,

Noch schlägt das Herz so warm.

Wann grünt ihr Blätter am Fenster?

Wann halt' ich mein Liebchen im Arm?

And when the cocks crowed

my heart awoke;

now I sit here alone

and reflect upon my dream.

I close my eyes again,

my heart still beats so warmly.

Leaves on my window, when will you turn green?

When shall I hold my love in my arms?

Dans la forêt de Septembre by *Faure*

Ramure aux rumeurs amollies,
Troncs sonores que l'âge creuse,
L'antique forêt douloureuse
S'accorde à nos mélancolies.

Foliage of deadened sound,
Resonant trunks hollowed by age,
The ancient, mournful forest
Blends with our melancholy.

Ô sapins agriffés au gouffre,
Nids déserts aux branches brisées,
Halliers brûlés, fleurs sans rosées,
Vous savez bien comme l'on souffre!

O fir-trees, clinging to chasms,
Abandoned nests in broken branches,
Burnt-out thickets, flowers without dew,
You well know our suffering!

Et lorsque l'homme, passant blême,
Pleure dans le bois solitaire,
Des plaintes d'ombre et de mystère
L'accueillent en pleurant de même.

And when man, that pale wanderer,
Weeps in the lonely wood,
Shadowy, mysterious laments
Greet him, likewise weeping.

Bonne forêt! promesse ouverte
De l'exil que la vie implore,
Je viens d'un pas alerte encore
Dans ta profondeur encor verte.

Good forest! Open promise
Of exile that life implores,
I come with a step still brisk
Into your still green depths.

Dans la forêt de Septembre by *Faure*

Mais d'un fin bouleau de la sente,

Une feuille, un peu rousse, frôle

Ma tête et tremble à mon épaule;

C'est que la forêt vieillissante,

Sachante l'hiver, où tout avorte,

Déjà proche en moi comme en elle,

Me fait l'aumône fraternelle

De sa première feuille morte!

But a slender birch by the path,

A reddish leaf brushes

My head and quivers on my shoulder -

For the ageing forest,

Knowing that winter, when all withers,

Is already close for me as for her,

Bestows on me the fraternal gift,

Of its first dead leaf!

Artist

Lo and behold the light at the end of the tunnel! The Journeyman has come to terms with some of his shortcomings and emerges as a full-fledged artist.

Enlightened by this new revelation, our protagonist enjoys this new era with an uplifting cavatina **Ecco ridente in cielo** by **Gioachino Rossini**. From his well known opera “Barber of Seville”, Count Almaviva here is wooing Rosina. The coloratura writing represents his deepest feelings of joy and excitement of seeing her.

This newfound love and joy is echoed in **Mozart’s Wie Stark is nicht dein Zauberton**. In this scene Tamino plays the magical flute enchanting the animals in the forest. This aria’s ode to the power of music echoes Vaughan Williams earlier Orpheus with his lute.

We look at a different side of joy with **Debussy’s Beau Soir**. Debussy (1862-1918) explored newer sonorities, which prioritised colour over functionality, and opened up a new sound palette for the next generation of composers. In this, a languid and hazy atmosphere is created to complement the relaxed and laidback imagery within the poem.

We end this journey with a celebration! **Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)** is well known for his piano concertos and symphonies. However, he wrote multiple songs as well, with some being turned into ballets. One such song would be **Весенние воды (Spring Waters)**. The rushing torrent portrayed by the piano alongside the passionate declaration of the melody line announces the arrival of Spring with all its glory.

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Ecco ridente in cielo by *Rossini*

Ecco, ridente in cielo
spunta la bella aurora,
e tu non sorgi ancora
e puoi dormir così?

Lo in the smiling sky,
the lovely dawn is breaking,
and you are not awake,
and you are still asleep?

Sorgi, mia dolce speme,
vieni, bell'idol mio;
rendi men crudo, oh Dio,
lo stral che mi ferì.

Arise, my sweetest love,
oh come, my treasured one,
soften the pain, oh God,
of the dart which pierces me.

Oh sorte! già veggo
quel caro sembiante;
quest'anima amante
ottenne pietà.

Oh joy! Do I now see
that dearest vision:
has she taken pity
on this soul in love!

Oh istante d'amore!
Oh dolce contento!
Felice momento
che eguale non ha!

Oh, moment of love!
Oh, moment divine!
Oh, sweet content
which is unequalled!

Wie stark ist nicht dein Zauberton by *Mozart*

Wie stark ist nicht dein Zauberton,
weil, holde Flöte, durch dein Spielen
selbst wilde Tiere Freude fühlen.

Doch nur Pamina bleibt davon.

Pamina! Pamina! höre, höre mich! –

Umsonst, umsonst! –

Wo? wo? wo? ach wo, wo find' ich dich? –

Ha, das ist Papagenos Ton! –

Vielleicht sah er Paminen schon! –

Vielleicht eilt sie mit ihm zu mir! –

Vielleicht führt mich der Ton zu ihr!

How powerful must be your magic tone,
Because, wondrous flute, even wild beasts
Feel joy at your sound.

But only Pamina stays away.

Pamina! Pamina! Listen, hear me! –

In vain, in vain! –

Where, ah where shall I find you?

Ha! That is Papageno's note!

Perhaps he's already seen Pamina! –

Perhaps she's hurrying to me with him!

Perhaps the sound will guide me to her!

Beau soir by *Debussy*

Lorsque au soleil couchant les rivières sont roses,
Et qu'un tiède frisson court sur les champs de blé,
Un conseil d'être heureux semble sortir des choses
Et monter vers le cœur troublé;

Un conseil de goûter le charme d'être au monde
Cependant qu'on est jeune et que le soir est beau,
Car nous nous en allons, comme s'en va cette onde:
Elle à la mer—nous au tombeau!

When at sunset the rivers are pink
And a warm breeze ripples the fields of wheat,
All things seem to advise content -
And rise toward the troubled heart;

Advise us to savour the gift of life,
While we are young and the evening fair,
For our life slips by, as that river does:
It to the sea - we to the tomb.

Весенние воды by *Rachmaninoff*

Ещё в полях белеет снег,
А воды уж весной шумят --
Бегут и будят сонный брег,
Бегут, и блещут, и гласят...

Они гласят во все концы:
«Весна идёт, весна идёт!
Мы молодой весны гонцы,
Она нас выслала вперёд.

Весна идёт, весна идёт,
И тихих, тёплых майских дней
Румяный, светлый хоровод
Толпится весело за ней!...»

The fields are covered still with snow,
But Spring has swollen all the streams.
They run and sparkle as they go,
And wake the shores from drowsy dreams.

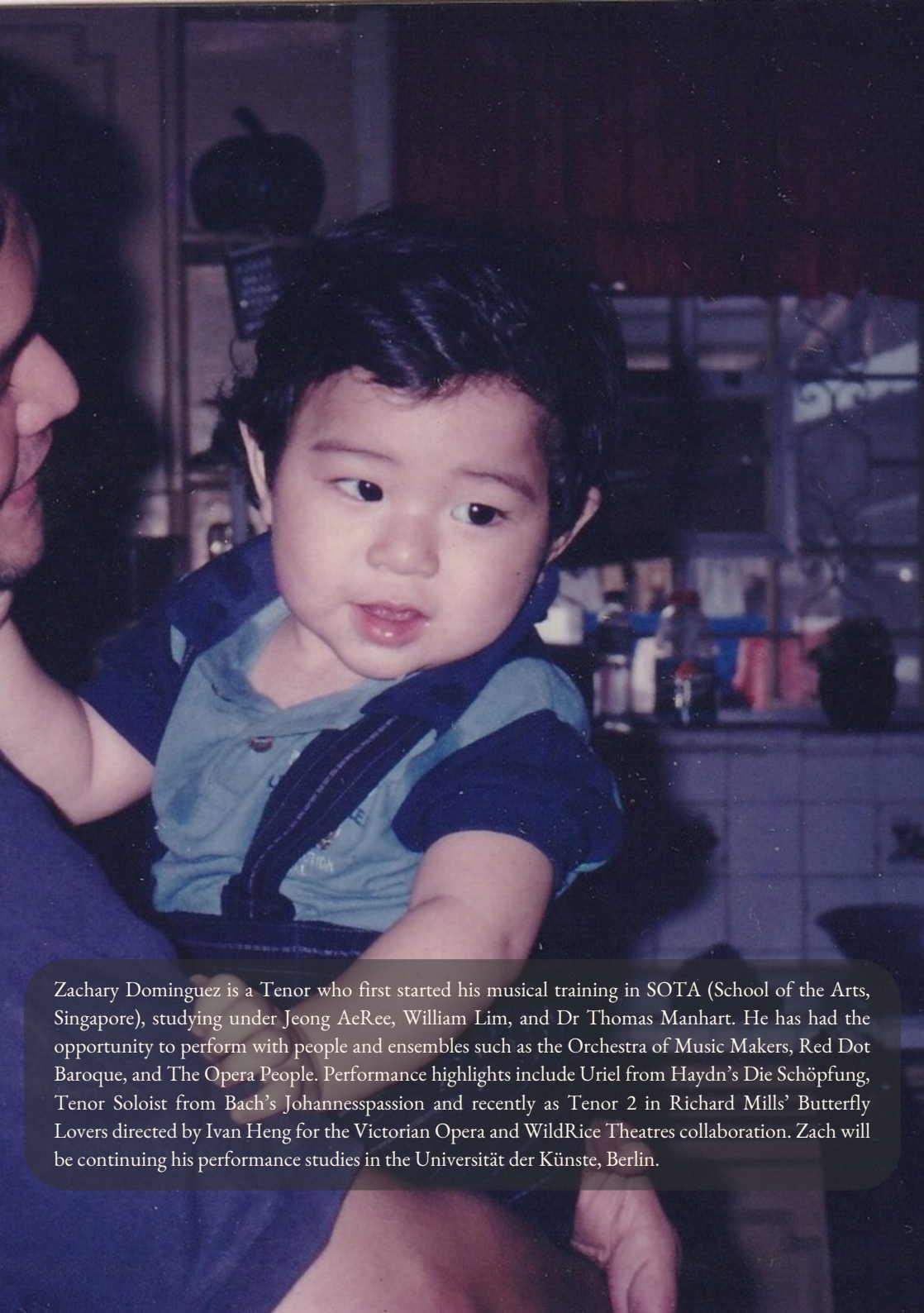
They call out loudly on their way:
“Spring’s coming on! Spring’s coming on!
We bring the message here today,
That’s why we meet you on the run!

Spring’s coming on! Spring’s coming on!
And soon the lovely days of May
Will follow happily along
And dance a merry roundelay!”



King Albert Park, 2024

A new chapter has begun with the arrival of Spring! The Artist reflects on the journey he has just gone through and embraces the fact that all of these were necessary, cyclical even. These are stages where he will have to experience again as he traverses on in the world.



Zachary Dominguez is a Tenor who first started his musical training in SOTA (School of the Arts, Singapore), studying under Jeong AeRee, William Lim, and Dr Thomas Manhart. He has had the opportunity to perform with people and ensembles such as the Orchestra of Music Makers, Red Dot Baroque, and The Opera People. Performance highlights include Uriel from Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*, Tenor Soloist from Bach's *Johannesspassion* and recently as Tenor 2 in Richard Mills' *Butterfly Lovers* directed by Ivan Heng for the Victorian Opera and WildRice Theatres collaboration. Zach will be continuing his performance studies in the Universität der Künste, Berlin.