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**Performance aspects and the role of children's choir parts in
vocal-instrumental stage works**

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This dissertation is the result of the author's interests and work at the Baltic Opera in Gdańsk as a choir director, conductor of the Children's Opera Choir and the "Canzonetta" Children's Choir of the General Primary and Secondary Music School. Feliks Nowowiejski in Gdańsk.

The participation of the children's choir in the performance is, according to the author, an interesting research aspect from the point of view of the material of the musical work, its performance features and role in the performance. An interesting problem is an attempt to answer the question whether extracurricular musical choral activity arouses and broadens children's interests - whether some form of acculturation then takes place.

The main purpose of this doctoral dissertation is a descriptive and analytical presentation of the performed fragments of operas. On this basis, the author examines the performance aspects of a children's choir and whether the preparation of a choir for a stage work is characterized by other performance problems specific to this form of art, i.e. whether preparing, for example, a concert is something different than preparing an entire performance. Next, it is important to determine the role of the children's choir in the performance, whether it is its important link or whether its importance is marginal. Another important research goal is an attempt to determine whether the participation of children in the performance has a positive impact on them, with particular emphasis on the interest in music, and the impact on the child and peer relationships.

The research methods used in this dissertation are: elementary analysis, participant observation during the process of preparing the choir for rehearsals and performances; a survey was also conducted among children who participated in performances with the participation of a children's choir in the artistic season 2022/2023. The survey was also addressed to the parents of these children.

The fragments of operas discussed in this dissertation constitute a large cross-section of children's choir parts in opera performances. The variety of epochs and styles allows for the observation of many performance and formal aspects, creating a diverse example of children's choir parts in performances. In all the analyzed titles, the parts of the children's choir are small. They are usually placed within one scene or as smaller fragments appearing within the act or the whole work. The level of complexity of the sound matter corresponds to the child's perceptual abilities, although there are elements that are vocally demanding and difficult to perform. An additional problem is the combination of singing with stage movement, with light, scenography and costumes, which results directly from the specificity of working in an opera theatre.

This dissertation consists of six chapters: Chapter 1 explains what the form of opera is and presents its historical outline, Chapter 2 describes the roles of a mixed choir and a children's choir in opera performances. Chapter 3 concerns the analysis of the verbal and dramatic layers of the titles analyzed in this dissertation, along with the embedding of the part of the children's choir in the plot of the work. In Chapter 4, the author analyzes the parts of the children's choir from operas selected by her (with a wide stylistic range) and performed on the stage of the Baltic Opera in Gdańsk in repertoire performances staged in 2018-2023. In chapter 5, the author describes in detail performance issues and elements of choir preparation related to the conducting technique during choir preparation. Chapter 6 is a description of the author's research and a comparison of existing research results among children - regarding the impact of children's participation in an opera performance on their interest in music and emotions accompanying performances.

The annexes contain audio-video material of titles performed on the stage of the Baltic Opera in Gdańsk, recordings made in the concert hall of the Primary and Secondary Music School in Gdańsk, sample surveys, composers' biographical notes, posters of opera titles, a list of drawings and tables.