ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Elsa’s Dream: Inspiration and Musical Development in Richard Wagner’s Lohengrin

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Richard Wagner’s Lohengrin bridges the gap of musical style between his operas and music dramas. Characteristics of French Grand Opera, Italian bel canto, and German Romantic opera are all found in Lohengrin, as is the influence of Giuseppe Verdi and Carl Maria von Weber. Elements of both Christian and Greek mythology are central to the plot of Lohengrin and are seamlessly combined to form a story rich in fantasy. This creative project paper explores Elsa’s Act I aria “Einsam in trüben Tagen” or “Elsa’s Dream,” as it chronicles the tale of Elsa and the Swan Knight, and acts as a catalyst for the rest of the action in the opera. Comparisons between Lohengrin and Wagner’s later music dramas are examined, as well as the main motives in the opera.