

Interpreting A Song

Handout – HCNW 2016

Bring Life To Your Music

Look for clues...

- Rising and falling melodies / part lines
 - o Rising melodies tend to crescendo; descending melodies tend to decrescendo
- Tight vs. spread chord voicings
 - o Tight voicings easier to sing loud (esp. if high); spread voicing must balance to the capabilities of the lowest voice in the chord (often softer, for women in particular)
- Embellishments and other devices vs. forward motion / tempo
 - o Echoes, bell chords, swipes, patter, stomps, etc.
- Identify musical high point / climax
 - o This will usually be the loudest point of the song
- Identify musical low points
 - o This will usually be the quietest point of the song

Bring Life To Your Lyrics

Look for clues...

- Identify the emotional high point / climax lyrically
- Identify the emotional low point lyrically (i.e. moments of introspection, realization)
- Identify words to hold and words to leave
 - o Support the point of view you wish to convey
 - o Emphasize words that are key to the message of the song
- Identify texture words
 - o Opportunities to change up your sound or vocal treatment
 - o Alliterative and onomatopoeic opportunities

Look for Alignment: Music and Lyric Working Together

- Are the musical and lyrical peak aligned in the arrangement?
- Are the musical and lyrical low points aligned?
- Phrasing – will the chords support the lyrics you want to caress and/or move through?

Make Modification to Support Your Skills

- Stronger voicings to suit your vocal ranges?
- Additional breathing points? Rhythmic breaths or embellishment adjustments?
- New Intro? New Tag?

Make Your Music Your Own!