

Brahms's Song Collections

Brahms once complained that singers never performed his songs in the groups in which he had published them, which he likened to 'song bouquets'. Over a century later, many singers and musicologists continue to ignore Brahms's wishes and focus on the individual songs rather than the bouquet groups. This is the first detailed study of the implications of Brahms's comments. Following an examination of contemporary aesthetic and generic frameworks, the book traces Brahms's *Lieder* from their conception, to the arrangement into bouquets, to performance and reception, and examines the sometimes contradictory roles played by poet, composer, performer and recipient in creating coherence in song collections. An investigation of the graphic cycles of Max Klinger reveals a startling visual analogue of Brahms's conception of the song bouquet, and a final examination of the evidence of Brahms's aesthetic outlook reveals that his intentions may have been cyclic in more than one sense.

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In memory of Ann Anderson and Gavin Saunders



Wie Mel-lo - di - en___ zieht es mir lei - se durch den Sinn,

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[Inset] Unknown photographer, *Max Klinger in an armchair*, c. 1910. Purchased 1983. Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales [207]

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