



# The Concert Song Companion: A Guide to the Classical Repertoire

*Charles Osborne*

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WHAT I HAVE attempted in this book is a survey of song; the kind of song which one finds variously described as 'concert', 'art', or sometimes even 'classical song'. 'Concert song' seems the most useful, certainly the least inexact or misleading, of some descriptions, especially since 'art song' sounds primly off putting, and 'classical song' really ought to be used only to refer to songs written during the classical period, i. e. the 18th century. Concert song clearly means the kind of songs one hears sung at concerts or recitals. Addressing myself to the general music-lover who, though he possesses no special knowledge of the song literature, is never theless interested enough in songs and their singers to attend recitals of Lieder or of songs in various languages, I have naturally confined myself to that period of time in which the vast majority of these songs was composed, though not necessarily only to those composers whose songs have survived to be remembered in recital programmes today. I suppose this to be roughly the three centuries covered by the years 1650-1950, though most of the songs we, as audiences, know and love were composed in the middle of this period, in other words in the 19th century.

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