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PRESS RELEASE: SPRING 2015

NYSTA Names Anna Hersey Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints*

The New York Singing Teachers Association is proud to announce the appointment of Dr. Anna Hersey as the third Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints: The Official Journal of NYSTA*.

NYSTA president Judith Nicosia writes:

"NYSTA is delighted to announce the appointment of Anna Hersey as next in the line of distinguished editors for *VOICEPrints*. Her credentials equip her with the skills necessary to do a great job and she will serve on the Board of Directors until Matthew Hoch steps down in June 2016. During that time, she will work with Dr. Hoch to learn what the editorship entails. We welcome her and look forward to her contributions of time, energy, and inspiration."

Matthew Hoch, NYSTA's vice president and current Editor-in-Chief, announced his retirement from *VOICEPrints* in May 2014. Hoch has edited *VOICEPrints* since 2008, succeeding founding editor Daniel James Shigo, who served as Editor-in-Chief from 2003–2008.

Hersey will serve alongside Hoch as Editor-Elect during the 2015–2016 season, Hoch's final year as editor. "I could not imagine a better choice to succeed me as Editor-in-Chief of this publication," Matthew Hoch writes. "I am excited for the future of *VOICEPrints* under Dr. Hersey's capable leadership."



Hailed by critics for her "towering, delicate and graceful" voice, soprano **Anna Hersey** enjoys performing a wide range of vocal repertoire. A native of Minnesota, Dr. Hersey earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Miami and pursued advanced studies at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena. She holds master's degrees in performance and in musicology/ethnomusicology from the University of Minnesota, and a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University.

A noted expert on Scandinavian vocal literature and diction, Hersey was a Fulbright Scholar at the Kungliga Musikhögskolan (Royal College of Music) in Stockholm and also conducted research at Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium (Royal Danish Academy of Music) and Københavns Universitet (University of Copenhagen), thanks to a post-doctoral fellowship from the American Scandinavian Foundation. She has presented her research at NATS, the Conference on the Physiology and Acoustics of Singing, the University of Copenhagen Center for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use, the American Choral Directors Association, the College Music Society, and the Yale Conference on Baltic and Scandinavian Studies. Hersey has published numerous articles on Scandinavian diction and literature in the *Journal of Singing* and *VOICEPrints*, and her translations and transcriptions have been published by Plangere and Carnegie Hall. Her first book, *Scandinavian Art Song: A Guide to Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish Diction*, is forthcoming from Rowman & Littlefield.

As a performer, Hersey has appeared with Palm Beach Opera, Florida Chamber Orchestra, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Hispanic-American Lyric Theater, Skylark Opera and The Minnesota Opera, among others. Hersey was chosen as a second prize winner in the 2014 Alexander International Vocal Competition. She was a national semi-finalist in the Florida Grand Opera Competition, the Classical Singer Competition, and the NATS Artist Auditions, receiving the Karl Trump Award from the NATS Foundation. She has performed in master classes with notable artists such as Renée Fleming, Dawn Upshaw and Håkan Hagegård. An active pedagogue, Hersey completed the vocal pedagogy certificate at the University of Minnesota under the tutelage of Clifton Ware. Hersey previously taught at Iowa State University, Broward College, and the University of Miami, and in the summer is on the faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. She is currently Assistant Professor of Voice at Eastern New Mexico University.

MESSAGE FROM THE *President*

Covert Practice



This time of the year, or perhaps all the time during the year, teachers are under a fair amount of pressure, real or imagined, to get things done in the voice studio. Whether it is selecting material for a cabaret debut, preparation for auditions, or polishing for performances of all kinds, learning new repertoire, solidifying jury material, getting ready for summer programs or an off-Broadway preview... the list seems endless and the time is always limited. Of necessity, our pace is often quite quick, especially with professional or nearly professional singers.

The nature of virtually all of what we do is overt—we ask for a change, the student sings it back or pronounces it out loud or perhaps does a gesture to indicate a new idea. Rarely do we allow more processing time for change during a lesson, for the internalization of difficult/new concepts, for correction of errors—time is of the utmost importance.

Rightly or wrongly, as singers we are often judged by how quickly we can change something we are doing to please the voice teacher, the coach, the *repétiteur*, the conductor, the stage director, etc. It often is not fair, but it is the way the professional musical world works—time is money, particularly in lessons, and as teachers we need to get results so our singers can be successful, happy, fulfilled, and working (as opposed to unemployed).

Frustration on both the part of the singer and the teacher can easily occur when lessons are packed to the gills with change. Some of this frustration involves differing learning styles between teacher and student. Most students do not learn as their teachers do/did, and they may not learn well the way their teachers teach. How do we adapt our teaching style to their learning style, for optimal results in a minimal amount of time? I do not have the answer to that question, though I believe we should all constantly investigate this area of learning. But I did stumble on a simple way to assist singers in their learning process—whatever it is—during any lesson.

On my studio piano is a rectangular piece of blue construction paper with the initials “CP” on it. It is called the CP COUPON. Singers are instructed to either reach for the coupon to “redeem” it or simply ask for CP whenever they need it. The letters stand for COVERT PRACTICE. During CP, the singer takes as much time as s/he needs to practice what’s trying to be fixed. This is seldom more than 30-45 seconds.

The idea behind CP is as familiar as the reading we did in grade school. At first, we all took turns reading aloud (“overt” practice) so the teacher could check our pronunciation, cadence, flow, and comprehension. Later on, we were asked to read silently (“covert” practice), which engaged our imagination. I simply borrowed that idea for the voice studio so students would have time to internalize their physical coordination while using their imagination.

The “rules” for CP are few: during CP the singer must silently mouth the phrase, word or note that’s been targeted for change a minimum of four times. Within the time period, s/he must breathe normally, employ the breath used in singing, pronounce the words, audiate the pitches, and sense the vibrations of singing within the vocal tract. Only after the fourth time is the singer permitted to sing the passage aloud. If the result isn’t what the singer felt/heard during CP, we go back to CP again and see if a second go around with the procedure produces better results.

The restrictions on the amount of CP usage are also minimal: it should only be used 3–4 times in any one lesson or rehearsal. The benefits, however, are many:

- The “tempo” of the lesson slows down to accommodate the singer’s needs, OR the singer learns to slow down to accommodate his/her own impatience. The singer takes time to identify the body, breath, articulation and phonation connection s/he intends to use to correct the problem spot(s).
- The physical act singing without sound *still* trains the muscles of the vocal tract.
- The singer uses the opportunity of silence in which to audiate (hear internally) the correct notes and *timbre* needed for the piece.
- The singer takes time to use the articulators efficiently to correct a pronunciation logjam.
- The singer has time to identify the sensations that singing produces, without being distracted by the sound of his/her voice—and we all know how often that occurs.

The best thing about CP is that the singer invokes its usage of his/her own volition. If the silent practice isn’t needed, the coupon stays put on the piano lid. If it is needed, the singer can reach out for a lifeline as often as necessary. On the other side of the piano keyboard, the teacher can also request that the student use CP if the “defeated” level is rising and positive

results are declining.

This procedure also works well in choral settings. Section leaders (or possibly entire sections) identify when their members are having difficulty with a particular passage, something which can elude the conductor at times, and claim CP for the one or two minutes of work (or less) needed to correct the errors.

It’s slightly amazing what this simple procedure can do for a lesson/coaching and for a student. It gives the singer temporary control of the lesson so s/he can lower the frustration level. It works at all levels—children love it. Most important, it instills confidence that one can fix one’s problems and be successful, while engaging the all-important coordination of body and mind.

Whether we realize it or not, every lesson we teach has a tempo marking, a performance indicator (is this an *andante* lesson or a *vivace* lesson or something in between?), a dynamic marking and an emotional “temperature.” CP is simply a way to reduce anxieties while helping the singer, and perhaps the teacher as well, get off the express train and hop on the local. We deal with the temporal dimension all day, every day—we need to foster in our singers the ability to do the same for themselves, especially when dealing with the inevitable corrections and changes they need to effect for their singing.

I had been thinking about the subject of this month’s message for a while before our recent online chat with Lynn Holding on March 29: *Singing with the Brain in Mind*. Let me urge you to view the recording of that chat for NYSTA which is posted on our website. It contains very useful and relevant information on attention, learning and memory for all of us. Lynn made many excellent points and recommended several good books for further enlightenment. Please also check on her regular column in the *NATS Journal of Singing* entitled “Mindful Voice.” It will inform your teaching in many beneficial ways.

May your pharynx always be moist and your summer renewing and refreshing.

Judith Nicoria

President
president@nysta.org



MESSAGE FROM THE *Editor*



Dear Colleagues,

One year ago, I announced my intention to step down as Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints* effective June 1, 2016. Throughout the fall of 2014, a small NYSTA committee began the process of naming my successor by accepting letters of interest for the position. In January and February 2015, Skype interviews were conducted, and shortly thereafter the president recommended a top candidate to the NYSTA board of directors. In this issue, we are excited to name Dr. Anna Hersey as Editor-Elect of *VOICEPrints*.

I first met Dr. Hersey in the summer of 2013 at the Eighth International Congress of Voice Teachers (ICVT8) in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, where she presented a session on Swedish diction to a standing-room-only audience. My work with Anna continued when

she wrote a feature article at my invitation for the May/June 2014 issue of *VOICEPrints*. She is a NYSTA member with a strong background in both scholarship and performance, presenting her work at many national and international conferences and holding degrees in both voice and musicology. I cannot think of a better choice to be Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints*. I look forward to having Dr. Hersey work alongside of me during my final season in 2015–2016.

This issue features the second and final part of Dr. Sharon Radionoff's article on singing contemporary Christian music, and we are also pleased to announce this year's David and Nancy Adams scholarship recipients. This year's scholarships will be used to fund four singers at SongFest 2015 in Los Angeles.

Finally, we mourn the passing of two longtime NYSTA members: Barbara Bliss Mestre and Kenneth Newbern. Their obituaries appear in this issue.

On behalf of all of us at NYSTA, I wish you a productive and renewing summer, which for many of us will involve a fair amount of singing and teaching. As always, *VOICEPrints* is YOUR publication, so please send all questions, comments, and suggestions for future articles to me at voiceprints@nyst.org OR to Anna Hersey at anna.hersey@enmu.edu.

Sincerely,
Matthew Hoch
Editor-in-Chief,
VOICEPrints

VOICEPrints

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2014

- Richard Leech:** *The Balanced Voice*
- Elizabeth Kling:** *Healthy Singing at Any Age*
- Amy L. Cooper:** *Remedial Voice: The Show Must Go On*
- John West:** *Accent Reduction & Dialect Acquisition*
- David McCall:** *Contemporary Voice*
- Lisa Rochelle:** *Managing Muscle Tension in Contemporary Theatre Singing*

Janet Pranschke, moderator

2013

- Jeanne Goffi-Fynn:** *Addressing and Avoiding MTD*
- Matthew Hoch:** *Healthy Singing for College-Age Students*
- Lori McCann:** *Classical Voice with Lori McCann*
- Jan Prokop:** *Mixing It Up—Head Belt / Chest Belt*
- Melissa Cross:** *Staying Healthy with CCM Sound Production*
- Margaret Lattimore:** *Classical Voice with Margaret Lattimore*

Janet Pranschke, moderator

2012

- Stephen Oosting, Taina Kataja, Jeffrey Gall, Justin Stoney, Margaret Cusack, Mary Saunders-Barton.**

Janet Pranschke, moderator

2011

- Margaret Baroody, Gwendolyn Bradley, Scott McCoy, Sally Morgan, Michael Paul, Michael Rider, Patrick Wickham.**

Janet Pranschke, moderator

2010

- Herbert Burtis, Judith Coen, Jeanette LoVetri, Lori McCann, Scott McCoy, Patricia Raine, David Sabella-Mills.**

Marvin Keenze, moderator



Janet Pranschke

The SVS & Contemporary Christian Music—Part 2: Voice Balancing Exercises

by Sharon L. Radionoff, PhD

This article, Part II of The SVS and Contemporary Christian Music, outlines voice balancing exercises beneficial for the Contemporary Christian Singer. The first part was published in the March-April 2015 issue of VOICEPrints.

A few points of review from Article I: (1) The CCM artist is in a very demanding and often high-profile field which necessitates keeping the vocal “systems balance” well-aligned. (2) The act of singing can be compared to being on a teeter-totter or seesaw. A power shift takes place between muscle groups: sometimes gradual, sometimes abrupt. The complex systems for sound production that interact and must be balanced are respiration, phonation, and resonance.¹ And last, (3) each person is comprised of body, mind, and spirit. One can put into practice all of the appropriate exercises but the psyche can either hinder or help forward progress. When someone sings, all aspects of the persona are entwined.²

There are many sounds that a singer is capable of making. It is important for each singer to know what the central balance point is of his or her sound. There is a central point and a “window of opportunity” for coloration and effect. Post strenuous use, after a singer “plays” outside of the central balance point, he or she needs to “realign” in order to have an efficient balance. This is beneficial for longevity of singing with freedom and minimized risk of vocal problems.³

Bunch describes components of a singer that can have a bearing on his or her vocal quality as well as main factors that affect vocal quality. The factors that affect vocal quality include: (1) muscular overreaction (facial muscles, position and movement of the lower jaw, rigidity of the tongue, tension in the neck, tension in the chest), (2) emotional tension, and (3) medical/physical issues.⁴

The philosophy of voice balancing is to *create an environment of body awareness for release of tension in the sound production systems and to “reset” a central balance point.* This is a necessity for CCM artists that work at maximum potential each week all week long and must get back to a place of “homeostasis” or center point of balance. *Dorland’s Medical Dictionary* defines homeostasis as:

“1. The ability or tendency of an organism or a cell to maintain internal equilibrium by adjusting its physiological processes; and

2. The processes used to maintain such bodily equilibrium.”⁵

For the singer’s purpose, it is also advantageous to add a point found in dictionary.com, which states: “homeostasis is a state of psychological equilibrium obtained when tension or a drive has been reduced or eliminated.”⁶

Since the CCM artist has such a driving, demanding weekly experience, it is necessary to

get back to that center point called “homeostasis.” Here is a laundry list of one CCM artist’s ten-day schedule: Flew to LA on a Friday for an Osteen event, flew back to Houston for Saturday and Sunday services, traveled for meetings during the next week, flew to ATL the following weekend for another Osteen event, sang newly-released songs at Sunday services of a visiting church and then returned home the following Monday. The artist reported that the voice was extremely tired due to the body being exhausted. Remember that a singer is both athlete and instrumentalist.

The complex systems for sound production that interact and must be balanced are respiration, phonation, and resonance. However, prior to realigning the systems balance from continuous strenuous activation, it is necessary to remember that the skeletal frame of the body is the frame of the instrument. Every musical instrument has a frame and the voice is no different. The skeletal frame of the body is the frame of the vocal instrument.⁷

It is very common for the skeletal frame to become tight from a fast pace and amount of activity in life and/or travel, whether it be from sitting for long periods, lugging heavy suitcases, or carrying gig bags with instruments/equipment. Stiff necks, aching shoulders, tight chest, rib cages, and contained movement of the abdominal muscles can ensue (to name a few).

Body stretching to achieve openness and flexibility/accessibility is crucial for achieving homeostasis. The concept of body connectedness, torso openness, and flexibility along with movement of energy are the important focuses.

Many exercises can facilitate these goals. Because the physical body is the instrument, it is about training the body (the systems necessary) to respond in order to be able to express what one wants to express. How does one do this? By creating the environment with exercises that bring about the necessary brain/body response so the body can respond how one wishes without excessive energy or manipulative pushing, pulling, yanking, or shoving.⁷

I would recommend, however, that in order to reach the goal of flexibility and accessibility in an expedient manner, it is useful to first use stress release activities, relaxation, and passive airflow exercises. Stress release activities may include body movement such as passive or active head/neck exercises, shoulder rolls, body stretches, body movement, and relaxation exercises. Mental focus exercises should center on conscious thought of body alignment issues such as head/neck position, shoulders, upper torso, hips, knees, body weight etc.^{7,8} Mental/vocal focus should center on the individual singer’s “systems balance” that is to

align posture, respiration, phonation, and resonance.^{7,8}

Because the singing instrument is an integration of the whole person (body/mind/spirit) it is necessary to release body and mind stress along with aligning or finding the “systems balance.” A good way to release stress and tension is to do a few repetitions of airflow management exercises—blowing air for a comfortable consistent length of time using “huh,” /M/, /ʃ/, /f/, or /s/ (see *Figure 1*) and after blowing, release the abdominal area, let the lungs fill up with air, and repeat.⁹ Other stress release activities include body movement and stretching. There are many things available such as yoga and Feldenkrais along with massage and chiropractic treatments.³

Figure 1. (also see Figures 2a–c on next page)

/M/~~~~~
/ʃ/~~~~~
/f/~~~~~
/s/~~~~~

Begin in the lying-down position, back and side respectively. This is recommended because the objective is to release stress and to allow the body to function “naturally.” Since singing is an athletic activity, a singer takes what is “natural” to a heightened level. Therefore, it is imperative to know and be aware of how the body functions before trying to have the body function at a high athletic level. Moving from the back to the side position is useful as gravity is different, and one will feel more back expansion and more contraction of the abdominal muscles. One can also observe if the back muscles are pushing out near the end of the blowing out process instead of the abdominal muscles continuing to contract inward. There are pros and cons for every position. On the back, gravity tends to pull everything down and back, while the side position can make it difficult for the jaw position (gravity pulling the jaw toward the side one is lying on). One must work for effectiveness and efficiency of each position.

With airflow exercises it’s best to refrain from using the terms “breathe” and “take a deep breath.” There is already an association for most people with over-working for creating the behavior. Remember that the objective is to “allow”—not to “make”—to allow the body to function with a steady, managed airflow.³

Quick Reference Guide to Blow & Relax Airflow Sequence:

■ Blow out the air that is in you with the following sequence:

“huh,” /M/ (relaxed passive awareness)

/ʃ/, /s/, /f/ (allows for more active managed release of airflow as when singing)

■ It is beneficial to repeat each consonant three to

five times in a row. Each repetition allows the body to become more elastic, thereby allowing access to more air. Keep the sound volume steady from the beginning to end.

■ Relax your abdomen and allow air to come in. Abdomen and ribs (side/front/back) expand as inhalation occurs.

■ Useful body positions for airflow exercises include the back, side, sitting, standing and moving. (Figures 2a-c).



Figure 2a.

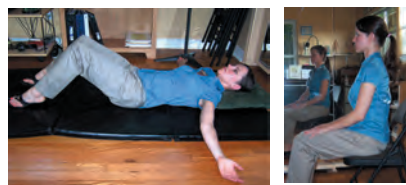


Figure 2b.

Figure 2c.

By using the unvoiced fricatives, a resistance space is created which air travels through. This is more than just a “semi-occluded” (semi-closed) space. The size and shape of the space creates the resistance through which airflow travels, thereby engaging the mechanism of the torso for our main power source—breath. One need not force, push, pull, or yank to understand the connectivity of the abdominal muscles and intercostal muscles for a steady release of energized, managed airflow, which is what what teachers like to call breath support or breath control.

Try this exercise: Create a “mouthpiece” with your hand by making a fist and blow into it like you would a brass mouthpiece. You will feel that the resistance of the mouthpiece will cause the abdominal muscles to contract and gradually continue to contract as you “buzz” the mouthpiece. The same body response can be achieved by using the unvoiced fricative /f/. Next you can move to using other unvoiced fricatives /s/ and /ʃ/.

Vocal Tension Release

After the airflow exercises follow “vocal tension release” exercises. These consist of vocal slides and single note patterns using the phonemes /f/ and /v/ in combination, beginning with the unvoiced consonant, then moving down the slide on the voiced consonant). Alternative phonemes could include /s/ and /z/, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ or /θ/ and /ð/. The main objective of these exercises is to feel the air at the front of the mouth (fv) (or forward movement of airspeed with the other phoneme choices) with ease of sound, not listening for beautiful sound.

It is important to do these exercises starting in a comfortable middle range and not in the high range. For discussion sake, fv will be highlighted.³

Quick Reference Guide to Vocal

Tension Release: TYPE #1:

DESCENDING AND WAVY SLIDES

■ First, start on a comfortable middle-range pitch and slide down to a comfortable low-range pitch.

■ Use a moderately slow glide.

■ Be sure that the upper teeth touch the bottom lip appropriately when using the [fv] combination.

■ The teeth should touch the bottom lip at the vermilion border. If one feels the airflow coming out between the teeth, then the teeth aren’t sufficiently touching the bottom lip, or else there is a gap between the teeth.

■ Airflow should be felt behind the top teeth.

■ This exercise may also be done by using an undulating wavy slide. Don’t try to make exact pitch definition. Again, the important issue is a lot of air at the teeth and ease of sound.

■ Other phoneme choices:

/f/ - /v/ - /fv/, /s/ - /z/ - /sz/, /ʃ/ - /ʒ/ - /ʒʃ/, /θ/ - /ð/ - /θð/

■ Refer to the Articulation Chart for shaping and positions (see Figure 3, below).³

Quick Reference Guide Vocal Tension

Release TYPE #2 :

PAIRS/LIGHT SWITCH—onset/offset of sound with breath and no vocal fold squeezing to begin or end sound.

■ This tension release exercise is a single note, slow exercise.

■ Start with continuous slow alternating repetitions of the unvoiced/voiced consonant choice.

■ Be sure that the tongue tip is behind the front bottom teeth during the whole slide: it will be different for other consonants. (Refer to the articulation chart, Figure 3, below).

■ Be sure that the center of the tongue does not

scoop or press as you alternate between voiceless and voiced pairs.

■ Additional phoneme choices (see Figure 3.)

/s/ - /z/ - /sz/

/ʃ/ - /ʒ/ - /ʒʃ/

/θ/ - /ð/ - /θð/

APS Descending Exercises

The next step of voice balancing would be the descending airflow/phonation/stretching (APS) exercises. This stage connects more sound with airflow. One of these slides will be discussed below. Please refer to *The Vocal Instrument* (Plural, 2008) for additional exercises.

Quick Reference Guide to Descendings

■ This slide is a straight descending slide.

■ Start with a comfortable pitch and slide down using continuous slow repetitions of the consonant/vowel choice. If tone controlling is happening, then speed up the tempo of the repetitions.

■ Be sure that the tongue tip is behind the front bottom teeth the whole slide (unless you add consonants such as /l/: (see Articulation Chart below).

■ Be sure that the center of the tongue does not scoop or press as you go down the slide.

■ Consonant/Vowel choices:

/fu - fu - fup/ or /flu - flu - flup/

/fo - fo - fop/ or /flo - flo - flop/

/su - so - ju/ or /ʃo - θu - ðo/ etc.

Tone Balancing

The last exercise presented is called a “tone balancing” exercise. This consists of choosing a comfortable note in the speaking range. On a single note such as A3, Bb3, B3 or C4 for

Figure 3.

SL Radionoff. *The Vocal Instrument*; Plural Publishing

Partial Articulation Chart

CLASS OF SOUND	ANATOMICAL AREA	PHONEME & (EXAMPLE)	
		Unvoiced	Voiced
Table 1. STOPS (plosives)			
BILABIAL	Upper and lower lips	/p/ (post)	/b/ (boast)
Table 2. FRICATIVES			
LABIODENTAL	Bottom lip and upper teeth	/f/ (fat)	/v/ (vat)
DENTAL	Upper teeth and tongue	/θ/ (thing)	/ð/ (this)
ALVEOLAR	Alveolar ridge and tongue tip	/s/ (sue)	/z/ (zoo)
PALATO-ALVEOLAR	Palato-alveolar ridge and tongue blade	/ʃ/ (she)	/ʒ/ (beige)
GLOTTAL	Glottis (space between the vocal folds)	/h/ (how)	
Table 3. GLIDES & LIQUIDS			
ALVEOLAR	Alveolar ridge and tongue tip		/l/ (let)
Table 4. NASALS			
BILABIAL	Upper and lower lips		/m/ (me)

females—C4 = middle C (Figure 4, below)—use the consonant vowel combination /fum/ or /fom/ or /flum/ or /flom/. If the singer desires to feel frontal “control,” then he or she can try the plosive /b/ in place of the fricative /f/. The object is to simply say easy repetitions of the chosen combination in slow and faster repetitions (/bum/- /bum/ - /bum/). It is not necessary to push pressure forward into the /m/. Simply by choosing one of these combinations you will feel the sound move forward since /m/ is the most frontal nasal consonant. All that one does is open and close the lips for the combination.⁹ By choosing the /m/, resonance is also being directed to the front and there is a comfortable sensation of frontal energy singers like to call frontal placement or “singing in the mask.”

Figure 4.



For anyone reading this thinking that the above is not just for CCM artists—who sing songs like “I’m a Believer” (Steve Crawford) or selections from the current #1 *Billboard* album “Heaven Raining Down” (Cindy Cruse Ratcliff)—and that these concepts of voice balancing can also apply to classical singing, pop, rock, Indian, classical, etc.—you are correct! Voice balancing (VB) exercises are applicable to form and function, and that means all genres. The key to healthy singing is form, function, and application. Stylism is a tool that is added on top of balance. The purpose of VB is to keep the systems in balance and alignment flexible, accessible, and ready for use regardless of style.

No matter what the style of singing, balance is the key. If longevity of voice use is a desired outcome, then knowledge and excellent use of the vocal mechanism are critical. Once again, singing and sound production are about balancing the systems necessary to achieve sound for a desired outcome in the healthiest way.¹ In order to achieve this, one must use exercises that train the voice to

respond. It is about using exercises that create the environment that allows for the desired response and not manipulating or forcing the voice.

Figure 5.



Steve Crawford, Worship Leader at Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas (Main Sanctuary).

The author wishes to thank Chrsi Carter for permission for Figures 2a–2c and Lakewood Church for Figure 5.

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Sharon L. Radionoff, PhD, is Singing Voice Specialist and Director of the Sound Singing Institute and Singing Voice Specialist/Voice Technologist voice care team member at the Texas Voice Center in Houston. Dr. Radionoff is an active clinician, lecturer, researcher, and author. Her most recent project, entitled “Where Does My Voice Come From?” has been released in DVD format from a live, filmed vocal health presentation.

Book projects include: *The Vocal Instrument* (Plural Publishing) and *Faith and Voice* (Inkwater books). Further articles by Dr. Radionoff can be found in *Texas Sings!*, *The Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians*, and she has chapters in several books. She serves on the editorial board of *The Journal of Voice* and is a member of TVF, CMS, NAFME, TMEA, and NATS.

Dr. Radionoff earned the BME from Eastern Michigan University, the MM from Southern Methodist University, and a PhD from Michigan State University. She also completed a Professional Fellowship at the American Institute for Voice and Ear Research Center in Philadelphia under Dr. Robert T. Sataloff. Dr. Radionoff may be contacted at the Sound Singing Institute by phone (713) 960-1648, fax (713) 521-1674, or e-mail: DrSharon@SoundSinging.com. or Log on to the website www.SoundSinging.com



IN MEMORIAM

Barbara Bliss Mestre died peacefully after a long illness on December 27, 2014. Barbara was the daughter of Barbara Field Benziger and Anthony A. Bliss, a past president of the Metropolitan Opera. On her mother’s side, she was a granddaughter of Marshall Field III. On her father’s side she was the granddaughter of Cornelius N. Bliss, elected Chairman of the Board of the Metropolitan Opera Association in 1938, whose older sister, Lillie P. Bliss was a founder of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). As a child, Barbara was surrounded by music and art, and devoted her life to both. As a singer Barbara appeared in opera and concert performances in Barcelona, Washington, DC, the New Jersey State Opera, and Alice Tully Hall. She served on the boards of the Sullivan Foundation and the Encompass New Opera Theater.

For many years she was a successful, well-regarded and beloved voice teacher in both New York and Los Angeles. In 2008 she published a children’s book, *Abigail Elliot and the Dollhouse Family*. She is survived by her longtime companion, Bruce E. Stevenson, siblings Robert F. Boggs, Anthony A. Bliss Jr., Eileen Andahazy-Chevins, Tim Bliss, and Mark Bliss, her son Ambler Moss III, her daughter Adelaide Mestre, her granddaughter Lucia Isabelle Schwartz, and countless lifelong friends. A memorial was held at Saint James Church at 865 Madison Avenue on February 9, 2015. Donations can be made in honor of Barbara B. Mestre to Encompass New Opera Theatre at www.encompassopera.org.

David and Nancy Adams *Scholarship Winners 2015*

This year, the David and Nancy Adams Scholarships have been split among four young artists who will be attending SongFest 2015 at the Colburn School in downtown Los Angeles. Two of those singers, selected by competitive audition, are featured below. NYSTA is honored to be partnering with SongFest for this event and delighted that more singers can be sponsored than anticipated.

Erika Baikoff began her vocal studies at Fiorello H. Laguardia High School. Before entering the vocal department of LaGuardia High School, she dedicated her time to ballet and playing the violin, instilling in her a unique musical sensitivity that is now present in her singing. In 2013 Ms. Baikoff was named a national finalist in the Young Artists Competition at the Mondavi Center and a recipient of the Bouchaine Young Artist Scholarship and the Shirley Rabb Winston Scholarship in Voice. In 2014 she participated in the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv and will be returning to SongFest this summer as a Schubert Fellow and recipient of a NYSTA David and Nancy Adams SongFest Scholarship. Ms. Baikoff is currently a junior in the French department at Princeton University and studies privately with Sooyeon Kim and Lorraine Nubar.



Tenor **Corey Dalton Hart** is a native of Asheville, North Carolina and is completing his first year in the Bard Graduate Vocal Arts Program. In April, he sang the world premiere of Kyle Gann's cycle, *Your Staccato Ways*, in New York on a concert with Dawn Upshaw. He has performed as Uriel in Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* with the American Symphony Orchestra and as Ahasuerus in Handel's *Esther* with the Bard Baroque Ensemble. In 2014 Mr. Hart graduated *magna cum laude* from Furman University after spending four months studying performance in Arezzo, Italy, at the Accademia dell'Arte with baroque specialist soprano Jill Feldman. He has appeared with the Furman University Symphony Orchestra as soloist in Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*. In addition to pursuing a vocal career, Mr. Hart has studied conducting and classical saxophone, and is a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Phi Eta Sigma. He currently studies with Lorraine Nubar.



2015 Janet Pranschke *PDP Scholarship*

NYSTA is pleased to announce that we are currently accepting applications for the 2015 Janet Pranschke PDP Scholarship. This is awarded annually to one Apprentice Teacher Member, and is intended to encourage emerging singing teachers to improve their teaching skills and knowledge of repertoire. Scholarship recipients will be awarded access to the PDP core curriculum — a series of five courses offered by leading figures in the fields of vocal pedagogy, science and performance. Recipients will receive on-demand, online access to courses, as well as on-site access for live presentations of the core subjects throughout the scholarship period.

Applicants must be a current Apprentice Teaching Member of NYSTA. Additionally, each applicant must be sponsored by a Singing Teacher Member in good standing, who will provide a letter of recommendation for the applicant. The deadline for application is August 1, 2015.

Apply online at nyst.org/scholarship

Felicity Graham, M.A., B.S., Director, Professional Development Program, ppddirector@nyst.org



IN MEMORIAM

Kenneth Claude Newbern, vocal coach and accomplished pianist, passed away in New York City on March 16, 2015, following a brief illness. He was 89. Born in Hollywood, Florida, and raised in Tampa, he was a graduate of Rollins College and the Juilliard School of Music. He served as a linguist in the US Army during WWII. During his long and varied musical career, Kenneth was the studio accompanist for many prominent voice teachers as well as music director for numerous opera workshops, including Lake George Opera Festival, Hunter College Opera, Aquarius Opera, Boris Goldovsky's New England Opera Workshop, and Creative Opera Company. He was on the music faculty of the 92nd Street Y for many years as a vocal coach and accompanist. In addition to being a brilliant accompanist, Kenneth was a specialist in language and memorization techniques.

Kenneth was an avid learner, interested in experiencing new languages and cultures, particularly those of Scandinavia. He sang for several years in the choir at the Norwegian Seaman's Church in New York. In recent years, he turned his creative energies to composing music, writing poetry, and what he called "World Projects"—his personal proposals to make the world a better place. He wrote letters to national and world leaders offering creative solutions to a variety of issues. He was predeceased by his parents and four siblings; he is survived by two siblings, numerous nieces and nephews and many dear friends. A celebration of his life will take place at the Sjømannskirken at a later date.

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NYSTA *New Member*



Brooklyn-based singer **Idelle Nissilia-Stone** began playing the French horn at age eight, building her musical skills and stamina long before she even thought of becoming a singer. As an undergraduate, she double-majored in brass and voice, and played in the Duluth-Superior Symphony Orches-

tra. A role in *Man of La Mancha* and the exhilarating choruses and waltzes in a production of *Die Fledermaus* inspired her to continue studying voice. While earning her master's degree at the University of Minnesota, Ms. Nissilia-Stone was a Met Audition semi-finalist, participated in the Minnesota Composer's Forum reading chorus, and appeared in the premiere of Libby Larsen's television opera for children, *The Silver Fox*. After graduation she appeared in holiday productions at the Minneapolis Children's Theater, and attended the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria.

Major soprano roles performed in New York include Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Micaela (*Carmen*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) and Amelia (*Amelia Goes to the Ball*). She performed the title role in *Suor Angelica* at the opening of the Rutgers/Camden Musical Theater Program. She continues to work as a soloist, ringer and choral section leader, and is currently studying jazz piano and roots percussion.

NYSTA *Distinguished Voice Professionals*

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