

VOICEPrints

JOURNAL OF THE NEW YORK SINGING TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

May–June 2013



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OREN LATHROP BROWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

FEATURED COURSE:

COMPARATIVE Voice Pedagogy 2013

June 8–9, 2013, Saturday and Sunday

On Site Location: Room 435 Horace Mann, Teachers College, Columbia University, West 120th Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, New York City.

During this course, six master teachers will present teaching demonstrations after case histories of students have been discussed. Concrete links will be made between various teaching strategies and the scientific and medical information covered in other courses of the PDP program.

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

9:30–10:00 AM **Introduction:**

Janet Pranschke

10:00–12:00 PM **Addressing & Avoiding MTD:**

Jeanne Goffi-Fynn

12:00–1:30 *Lunch Break*

1:30–3:30 *Classical Voice: Healthy Singing for College-Age Students:* **Matthew Hoch**

3:45–5:45 **Organic Artistry: A Cohesion of Technique, Intellect, and Imagination:** **Cynthia Munzer**

SUNDAY, JUNE 9

9:15 AM–11:15 **Mixing It Up: Head Belt / Chest Belt:**

Jan Prokop

11:30–1:30 PM **Staying Healthy with CCM Sound Production:** **Melissa Cross**

1:30–3:00 *Lunch Break*

3:00–5:00 **Classical Voice with Margaret Lattimore:** **Margaret Lattimore**

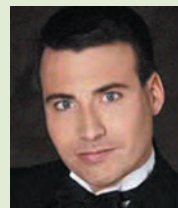
5:00–6:00 **Discussion & Wrap-up:** **Janet Pranschke**



Janet Pranschke



Jeanne Goffi-Fynn



Matthew Hoch



Cynthia Munzer



Jan Prokop



Melissa Cross



Margaret Lattimore

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MESSAGE *from the President*



Our last issue featured a remarkable testimonial from PDP participant (and Distinguished Voice Professional) Henry Moore. Mr. Moore lives and works in Indonesia and is, to date, our most “long distance” DVP. His testimonial moved me very deeply. He recounted in detail his experience with the courses and his gratitude for NYSTA’s Professional Development Program. It was for me not only an endorsement of our program, as first conceived by our Founding Director Janet Pranschke, but also a personal validation for the vision that I have held for the online delivery of NYSTA’s core curriculum. Thank you, Henry.

Since our first online offerings in 2007, technology has advanced, and demand has increased beyond my wildest expectations. Our first class—*Vocal Anatomy and Physiology*—used a phone link to listen to Dr. McCoy while viewing the presentation on their computers. By the time we offered *Anatomy* again, however, both audio and video were carried over a single platform, and by our last offering, *Voice Acoustics and Resonance*, both Dr. McCoy and the course participants could be seen and heard online! We have developed a virtual classroom that has literally touched the world. What started out as a “pilot program” has now turned into the premiere resource for voice professionals around the globe.

The future of our PDP is brighter than ever. I recently asked NYSTA Board Member Felicity Graham to step into the role of PDP Director

and I am delighted to announce that Ms. Graham’s vision for the program not only matches my own, but she also has the technological knowledge to enhance both the content and online delivery of the program as well.

Interest in our program has never been greater. Recently, our Vice President, Matthew Hoch, represented NYSTA at a conference held at the National Center for Voice and Speech in Salt Lake City. The symposium was called “Proposed Specialty Training in Vocal Health.” Also in attendance were representatives of ASHA, NATS, the Grabscheid Voice Center, other organizations and universities, who met to discuss the curriculum and standardization of the Singing Voice Specialist (SVS) designation. For those of you unfamiliar with it, SVS is generally understood to be specified for those technical voice teachers who work as part of a team of professionals which also includes a medical physician (ENT), and a voice therapist (CCC-SLP), and possibly even a physical therapist. On this team, the voice teacher contributes specifically to the habilitation and re-habilitation of the singing voice in a client with a diagnosed voice disorder, pathology, or physical trauma.

The NCVS symposium represents the latest (and a significant) effort to define an acceptable standard of knowledge, and possible certification, for the SVS practitioner. It is my hope that NYSTA’s PDP core curriculum—as well as future

courses—will become the preferred curriculum component in this certification. It should be noted that NYSTA is no stranger to this conversation and desire for this type of certification. Our original charter of 1906 included the desire for a “national standard of excellence” among voice teachers, and we have worked hard to fulfill that charge ever since.

In addition to our PDP course offerings, NYSTA has for many years fostered relationships with some of NYC’s top voice medicine professionals to offer the necessary on-site practicum needed to round out this type of training. Dr. Peak Woo and Dr. Linda Carroll have offered a Vocalogy Internship for more than fifteen years in which vocalogy interns spend four to nine months observing both the doctor and speech pathologist in treatment as well as surgery. It is this internship that has become the model for the SVS practicum component. And, both the course study and internship developed by NYSTA are the backbone of any serious attempt to standardize a national certification.

In addition to NCVS, Vice President Hoch will also be representing NYSTA at the next International Congress of Voice Teachers (ICVT) this summer in Brisbane, Australia. Dr. Hoch will again be presenting information about our online program in answer to increased demand in our specialized curriculum. These outreach opportunities themselves represent the ongoing fulfillment of NYSTA’s original 1906 charter, which today, 107 years later, has never been closer to being realized.

Sincerely,
David Sabella-Mills
President, NYSTA

MESSAGE *from the Editor*



Dear Colleagues,

This May–June issue is the 50th issue of *VOICEPrints*, thus marking the ten-year anniversary of the Official Journal of NYSTA. It is also my 25th issue and five-year anniversary as your editor-in-chief.

VOICEPrints was founded in 2003 as an expansion of the NYSTA Bulletin, which was published from 1940–2003. The new title was suggested by David Sabella-Mills and approved by the Board of Directors. While the Bulletin was essentially a newsletter, *VOICEPrints* represented something different, and this rebranding coincided with a shift in the focus of the journal, moving toward a regular publication of scholarly articles in addition to event advertisements, which were increasingly becoming the province

of email and the internet. Daniel James Shigo became the founding editor of *VOICEPrints*, and I am always indebted to the kindness and generosity he showed me when I assumed the publication’s reins in 2008.

This fiftieth issue brings you a featured article by Dr. Larry Hensel, Professor of Voice at the University of Wyoming. Dr. Hensel is also a certified Alexander Technique practitioner, and his article specifically talks about how he applies his knowledge to his voice teaching. In addition, NYSTA member Glenn Seven Allen shares with us a recent technical conversation he had with Arthur Levy, one of Manhattan’s most seasoned

and established voice teachers. I know you will enjoy reading this intriguing interview.

The month of June always brings with it NYSTA’s annual Comparative Pedagogy course at Columbia University. This is one of our signature events, and we hope to “see” all of you there (either in person or online).

Finally, we are pleased to present the slate of NYSTA Officers for 2014–2017. You can read about these candidates in this issue of *VOICEPrints*.

As always, *VOICEPrints* is YOUR publication, so please send all questions, comments, and suggestions for future articles to me at voiceprints@nyst.org.

Sincerely,
Dr. Matthew Hoch
Editor-in-Chief, *VOICEPrints*

INCORPORATION OF ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE PRINCIPLES IN TEACHING VOICE: *A Psychophysical Approach*

by Larry Hensel, DMA

INTRODUCTION

As a Certified Teacher of the Alexander Technique (AT) and a college-level voice teacher, I am often asked how much I incorporate AT into a voice lesson. While I am careful to make the distinction between a voice lesson and an AT lesson, my training as an AT teacher has greatly influenced my vocal pedagogical approach. F. M. Alexander (1869–1955) began his career as a stage actor, and later devised a methodology that can be used in any activity. He codified his discoveries into principles that would “free ourselves from the deeper and deeper layers of interference with natural functioning,” (Michael Gelb, *Body Learning*).

“Learning how to learn” is what distinguishes the AT from all the other “ways to grow.” (Frank Pierce Jones, *Freedom to Change*). You can only change as quickly as you can change your thinking, which might sound easy at first, but I have found it to be one of the most challenging parts of AT. Through the exploration of awareness and change that AT has provided, I find that I communicate pedagogical ideas in a much more direct, simple way. But the most consequential change has been in my response to my students’ psychophysical development in the complex art of singing.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE Use and Functioning

The quality of movement in any activity affects its function. We have often heard the expression, “our instrument is our body.” I pay attention to students’ physical use of their whole body in the act of singing, as it addresses their psychophysical self. (The psychophysical self can be thought of as the relationship between the students’ subjective judgment or perception of sensations and their actual physical movement.) AT has taught me methods of addressing their use, so that they begin to understand that use and function have a direct bearing on the quality of their work. I find that I ask questions like “Were you aware of what actually moved when you took that breath?”



Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869-1955)

and “Was your neck tight when you took the inhalation for that phrase?” They begin to take responsibility for their use in a much more mindful and conscious way.

Primary Control

Primary Control refers to the way the relationship of our head/neck/back (and I would include entire spine) significantly influences our whole body coordination and movement. The primary organization of how the head actually balances on top of the spine gives us the ease of function we seek when we sing. (The head balances at the atlanto-occipital joint at the top of the spine, which is between your ears and behind the tip of your nose—not at the bottom of the back of the skull, or the back of the neck.)

Singing is movement; it is accomplished by a complex series of physically coordinated events. In some pedagogical methods, there is the notion that there is a proper “posture” which is optimal for the physical act of singing. Posture is defined as a position of a person’s body—to put or to place something. To my AT way of thinking, posture implies a holding of the body and suggests a limited range of motion. If singing is movement, then trying to acquire a “posture” can potentially interfere with efficiency and ease in that movement—it is a conflicting idea. In AT terms, there is no such thing as a position, because our use, our primary control is a constantly changing, fluid, dynamic relationship.

Becoming an AT teacher has taught me how to sense that dynamic relationship in my own use. When that fluid relationship is compromised, a tight neck can often pull the head back and down (which can be seen by the student’s chin protruding forward). This downward compression interferes with the breath (intake and release). I have been astounded by how often students tighten their neck muscles on the inhalation, and are therefore tight before they initiate the sound. They are using a group of muscles that do not need to be used. Neck muscles help hold your head up and move it in many directions—they do not help you sing.

Unreliable Sensory Appreciation

Mr. Alexander discovered that he could not rely on his kinesthetic sense. The postural “habits” that accompanied his activity were so ingrained that they always felt “right” to him. Yet he ascertained that these postural habits interfered with his speaking voice, and that they contributed to his constant vocal fatigue. For example, singers can never truly “hear” what their voices are like. When students record themselves in a lesson, they often comment, “Do I really sound like that?” or “It doesn’t *sound* that way to me at all.” I have a similar experience when AT teachers work with me. They will help me initiate a change in my body balance and/or movement, and it often feels “wrong.” And then I look in the mirror, and I see that my kinesthetic sense is unreliable. My habits of holding or using muscle groups that do not need to be used interfere with the ease and efficiency of the activity and my body balance. I have discovered

that one cannot feel through tension. My old kinesthetic sense was formed by habits of misuse and undue tension. To paraphrase Mr. Alexander, “You have to be wrong a long time before you get right.”

Whole Body/The Whole Person

When I began working with an AT Teacher with my own singing, I noticed that I had a habitual pattern of pushing up my sternum. He commented, “Think of the global consequences of that action.” I noticed that my habitual pattern actually brought my arms in, and compressed my back ribs; I had very little range of motion with my breathing muscles. To help students become more aware of their psychophysical self, I often use AT strategies of awareness. I used to go through the different body “parts” in explaining body balance: feet, knees, hips, torso, arm, and head/neck. But then I observed that my students were “stacking” their body parts and were not developing a sense of their whole body. I ask them to think of the relationship of each part to the whole self, and primarily, the relationship of the head balancing on top of the spine and how that affects their whole self. Another strategy I employ is “being in the world.” As I began to incorporate my awareness of my whole body while taking in all of my surroundings, I was astounded that I was able to monitor my use in that activity much better and more of the time. The more heightened awareness I developed, the easier it was to assimilate AT principles into my artistic work.

Inhibition

Our reaction to stimulus often initiates our habits of misuse. By stimulus, I mean a thing or event that evokes a specific functional reaction in the body. What do we do when we see a passage of music that is difficult and challenging? What is our thinking as it approaches, and how does our body react to that thinking? Mr. Alexander found that he needed to inhibit the habit by his thought process. Students often make the comment when confronted with a vocal or musical challenge, “I just need to stop overthinking it,” or “If I just don’t think about it, then things come out easier.” I would make the argument that they need to redirect their thinking and eliminate the parts that interfere with the activity. When they say, “I just shouldn’t think about it,” it is really an attempt to inhibit the initial response of startle or tension. I have sometimes said to myself, “Just stop thinking stupid things.” “When the associated stimulus is presented, three choices are available: to make the response as it was originally learned; to make a different and more appropriate response; not to respond at all” (Frank Pierce Jones, *Freedom to Change*).

Direction

In Alexander work, we learn what not to do. It is the idea of the positive “no;” “I am not going to tighten my neck” to take a breath for singing. (Missy Vineyard, *How You Stand, How You Move, How You Live*). People are often surprised that AT is really about your thinking “in” the activity. We inhibit those habits that interfere with efficient movement by our direction of thought. When my students have performance anxiety, I often give them three pieces of direction: 1) notice the movement of your breathing (ribs and abdominal wall); 2) feel both feet on the floor—the whole foot—each one; and 3) check into the back of your neck to see if it is tight, and if it is, release that tension. This helps them to realize that they truly have

options available to them and that they no longer need to habitually muscle their way through the music. They have now given themselves permission to make a new choice.

Ends and Means

Musicians are notorious for fixating on a flawless performance, so much so that they obsess about the end result and forget about their use entirely. Alexander termed this “end-gaining” and identified it as one of the leading causes of habitual tension and misuse. If we are only focused on the goal or the outcome, then what is actually happening at the moment? I teach my voice students to think more about what I call the “how” of the “what;” not how am I doing vocally or musically? but rather, how am I actually doing this activity? What is actually happening physically? I direct them to bring their attention to the process and monitor their use as best they can during the activity. AT gives one the means whereby one can affect change. Therefore, attention to the process is the goal.

Hands-on Work

One aspect of the work that I feel is quite beneficial for my voice students is the hands-on work. AT Teachers complete approximately 1,600 hours of training to use their hands in a respectful, educated and gentle way to help guide the client into an easier way of being. By direction with my hands, I am able to help them with primary control (head balancing on the top of the spine), release habitual muscular tension, sense the complete movement of all twenty-four ribs, and have a greater sense of their whole body. Nearly all AT Teachers incorporate hands-on guidance in an AT lesson. The hands-on work shows potential for ease and efficiency of motion, and gives the student kinesthetic feedback. In essence, my educated hands-on makes them “louder” to themselves—it turns up their kinesthetic volume, if you will. They have a heightened sense that balance and ease are available to them all of time.

Other Observations

One AT concept that has made an enormous difference in my pedagogical approach is that of taking care of my own self first. If I am truly doing the best that I can for myself, my own use in a lesson is better (i.e. speaking and singing voice, keyboard skills, visual and aural observations, technical and musical instruction, and intuition). If my own use and AT directional thinking are the best they can be, then I am truly available for the student. I am reminded of the Rom Dass quote, “The only thing you have to offer another human being, ever, is your own state of being.”

Final Thoughts

One of my students once asked me: “What is your definition of an artist?” In my opinion, an artist is someone who “shows up.” They are present with their whole self, all of the time: intellect, emotional intent, and awareness of the physical/whole body. They do this (to paraphrase Mr. Alexander) all at the same time, one after the other. AT is a method that provides the means whereby you can move with greater ease and efficiency. I was drawn to the Alexander Technique because you do not take time out of your day to do it; in essence, you practice your presence and live the work. Alexander Technique, then, is really about the quality of your life.

AN ESSENTIAL ALEXANDER BIBLIOGRAPHY

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F. M. Alexander at work

WEBSITES

<http://alexandertechnique.com/>

“The Complete Guide to the Alexander Technique.”

<http://www.amsatonline.org/>

“American Society for the Alexander Technique (AmSAT).”

<http://ati-net.com/>

“Alexander Technique International”



PHOTO: Brian Degenfelder

Dr. Larry L. Hensel is currently coordinator of the Vocal Arts Area and Director of Opera Theater at the University of Wyoming. In addition, he is the founder of the Univeristy's touring Program for Young Audiences, Opera in a Gym. Dr. Hensel is also a certified teacher of the Alexander Technique. He has begun to integrate the Alexander Technique into the Department's curriculum, and is currently accepting private students who are interested in this life-changing work.

A native Iowan, Dr. Hensel began his musical education at the Interlochen Arts Academy; he then received his BA in Music from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. He began his professional musical career by becoming one of the youngest members of the Dale Warland Singers.

Hensel furthered his academic career by earning the DMA and the MM in performance and literature from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where he also earned the prestigious Performer's Certificate.

Dr. Hensel is a member of NATS, and a former President and Web Master for the Colorado/Wyoming NATS chapter. He is also a member of the National Opera Association, the College Music Society, and is a teaching member of Alexander Technique International. Opera in a Gym is now a member of Theatre for Young Audiences/USA, a subsidiary of the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young Audiences.

AN INTERVIEW *with Arthur Levy*

by NYSTA Member Glenn Seven Allen

Arthur Levy is one of the most successful and well-regarded vocal instructors in the United States. His clients include Tony Award winners as well as opera singers who have performed in major houses throughout the world. I have had the pleasure of being both a student and colleague of Mr. Levy and was able to share a lovely conversation with him about technique over a recent breakfast.

GLENN SEVEN ALLEN: As far as technique is concerned, when you approach a Broadway singer that is going to sing something “quasi-legit”—Adam Guettel, Rodgers and Hammerstein, etc.—what is the fundamental difference or change that you make with your approach as compared to classical singing?

ARTHUR LEVY: Good question. I look at it as the same technique as classical but I view it as registration turned upside-down. In other words, it's the same basic principles of how the voice works, but the dominance of a particular sound is different. All the great musical theater singers who can sing—and I don't really like using these words like “belty,” “chesty,” etc.—have some fundamental classical training, and they all have legitimate, well-trained head voices.

The thing is that the dominance is in the chest voice, and if you balance the head voice with a high chest voice, a high chesty sound will never sound like a painful, screaming rock “belt.” Ideally, the registers should always cooperate. You can call it “loft voice/ chest voice, heavy mechanism/light mechanism,” etc. But if you know how it works, it's just basically an equation, a ratio that is adapted to that singer's repertoire.

With someone like Audra McDonald, Marin Mazzie or an up-and-coming singer like Molly Ranson, their training has basically been classical in nature. Even Lauren Ambrose, who was preparing *Funny Girl*, has a great chest voice that was informed by a fully developed head voice. I view it as using the same sounds, but knowing that the dominance of one over the other is the issue. Addressing both sides of the sound and seeing how they overlap is to me essential, and I think the singers who do it best don't study a “placement” related technique.

I don't believe in mixed registration. I believe in *coordinated* registration like the old-fashioned teachers do. Mixing tends to be about finding a placement and showing everything into a place. It can sometimes create a consistent sound, but never a star-quality sound because it's monochromatic.

GSA: I don't believe in mixing either because, generally, when people say that they are mixing, it sounds to me like a quasi-falsetto. There's something happening with the vocal cords when they are not working in coordination, and that is fundamental. You can't call it chest resonance because it isn't really there. With a microphone, maybe you can get away with it. Or if you're tired from doing eight shows a week, it might be useful. But I don't really believe in it at all.

AL: Exactly. That's *exactly* what I meant about

placement, because placement presumes a shortcut to a resonant sound that's actually what I would call artificial buzz or *squillo*. I remember a teacher that long ago helped me, who went on to teach some musical theater students, who asked me “Do you get more nasality in that sound?” And I said “Nasality? What do you mean?” And he (or she—I forget) said: “Well, you know I mean chest resonance, but it's much quicker to ask someone to go for nasality.” So I actually tried this, and within minutes my head voice was going out and I was cracking on high A-flats!

GSA: So, with “nasality” you end up with spreading, because there was no lift, no “up and back” sensation and you were left with having to sing really wide in the face?

AL: Yes, you see that's why this whole thing with air and support is so often misunderstood. When you sing with any kind of spreading and laryngeal elevation—and laryngeal depression as well—you have to reverse the correct direction of the air, and you have to accelerate the air pressure so that the vocal cords can oscillate. That's why the opera singers who spread the voice in the *passaggio* (and the musical theater singers who do the same) end up in the doctor's office with inflammation—it's usually because they are abrading air through the cords. There's an old-fashioned idea that the phonation is air, but it's not. It's actually acoustics that one feels in the head—it's the *spin* of the voice. People say “send more air to the high note,” and a lot of good teachers do this—you actually can't do that. When I asked the ENT that I go to “if someone can send air or accelerate air to the high note,” he said it's not correct, it's ridiculous, unless you want to sing with a breathy tone quality.

GSA: This is something I struggle with right now because the body senses the vibration of higher intensity and wants to *do* something.

AL: That relates to vowel or sound intensity. I work with Audra who has an incredibly operatic, rich, dark, full voice with so much head voice already in it. How do we get the right balance in the upper or lower *passaggio* when she's singing something contemporary? We intensify the head voice if she starts in the chest and comes up through an *arpeggio*, and then diminish the volume without coming out of the chest. Head voice must naturally come in without a break if you keep the air under you and don't blow it out of you.

Let's say a belter is going up through middle voice: B-flat, B, C, C-sharp, D, sometimes even E-flat, I guess. If the singer stays in chest dominance but doesn't add air and volume, then he or she can get to a coordinated registration that has more chest than an opera singer by taking the vowel and using an intensity of brilliance that brings in the chest. So we are talking about vowel qualities that are complete with the correct balance of air pressure that can allow you to sing anything you want. It's when people start to “place” the voice or think of two separate registers (or believe there is only one

register) they will never, ever, ever get a great sound.

Look at Patti LuPone who is in her sixties: She's singing as well or better than ever! She was steeped—whether she studied it or not—in an operatic tradition from her family. She probably knew the Sutherland or Callas sound, and that aesthetic informs her singing. Marin was classically trained, and she applies this to everything she sings. It doesn't matter what she's singing! Even if we're working on a cabaret thing, we still always vocalize to a high E-flat. The lower voice informs the middle, the middle informs the top, and vice-versa. It's simply a matter of communication between the different parts of the voice. It's not about interrupting the flow and/or presuming that the voice should place itself in some place. That may be natural for someone else's bone structure, but not for yours.

Look at breathing: some people can study breathing, do 40,000 sit ups a day, and still may never ever feel their breath in their back. Some people have short waists, some people have long waists, and every singer is going to feel their breath differently within their bodies.

GSA: Yes, I don't like the word placement and I certainly don't like the word “break” because it implies that the voice violently stops or shifts and/or that there are actually two voices, and that you have to break through one to get to the other. And we are talking about something that should be efficient and elegant.

AL: But that's why, for the sake of expedience, so many people bought into the one-register thing. There are teachers who don't ever let their women singers use chest voice. Now, belt and chest are different: belt is an extremely loud, raucous chest sound. And it's useable, to a degree, but if you rely upon it alone, you will blow the other register out.

I think the position of the voice is breath-related positioning, and then the support and the sound have to work together cooperatively. When support is thought about separate from the tone, then it's just body strength driving the voice. I heard all the great singers. Many became vocal caricatures of what they were, decades after their stardom was finished. They all wound up singing the way they always sang.

If Domingo hadn't really known what his voice really was capable of, he would have been done singing fifteen years ago. And think about vibratos! Corelli didn't make his Metropolitan Opera debut until he was in his late thirties, and that happened after he'd gotten control of his fluttery vibrato. And all he did to fix it was to stabilize the larynx, and then he stabilized the support.

When people come to me and say they have support issues, I think to myself, “Okay, it could be the support, or there could be some kind of constriction in the sound that's giving the body the message to constrict the support.” And in some cases, people are taught an almost obsessive muscular support to open the throat. If the support is so tight and muscular that there's a delay between the

intake of breath and the onset of tone (to get “support”), what are you really supporting? Are you really getting natural flow from the intake of breath to the onset, or are you thinking that if my stomach muscles hurt, I must be supporting? Then everyone says I sing flat, or sharp, or ugly, or have a wobble, or flutter.

It's not that complicated. Whether musical theater or opera, there's no mystery. Hundreds of years ago, they figured it out—before laryngoscopes and vocalogists, before lip trills and vocal babysitting. And the soft-palate thing lately has become a mania, meaning soft-palate manipulation and hyper-extension (especially in the lower-middle register). The soft palate is going to be as high or low as it needs to be in whatever part of the range a person is singing in. And you can read many books on this.

GSA: And they make the “singer face,” the “soft palate face,” tilting the head forward and doing something with their eyebrows. I don't believe in a “singer face.” It seems that they are really just finding a new form or tension or facsimile of singing.

AL: I agree 100%. And please italicize this because this upsets me: *I feel bad for singers who receive superficial information and develop complexes because they have been working for five years on how to release the tongue.* And this: *Tension does not appear for the sake of tension.* If you believe in the laws of cause and effect, tension appears because something is out of balance or out of alignment somewhere else. People develop jaw tension because of an incorrect balance of sound. Or other tensions, such as one pushing too far forward or pushing too far backward. What happens is the body reacts with tension. If you had nothing to be anxious about, why would you have anxiety?

You have to go to the root of the sound and the breathing. And if you don't, you will be doing tricks and substituting releasing one tension only to find it elsewhere. As for tongue tension, if you view the mouth as a resonator instead of a release point, or try to overly shape sound with the tongue or mouth, then tension will always appear. Many singers even use the tongue as a sort of plunger to push down on the larynx and hyoid bone, which doesn't really actually move very much. People who try to depress the larynx end up pushing down on the wrong part of the larynx. Again, I think it comes from singers/teachers who try to make color in the mouth. But they often end up with a high larynx, low pharynx, and a very grooved, tight tongue.

Knowing your voice is like knowing who you are. But there are some people who only know themselves through their voice: they can do great things, but I don't think they can have a real life. The fear of being disappointed in the finished product of my voice terrified me. What I realized was my voice wasn't second-rate, but sometimes my attitude and my vocal approach were second-rate.

GSA: I agree, it's this “vocal transcendentalism” that really reveals the core of who we are. And often times, we don't like how it feels.



Respected voice teacher **Arthur Levy** has students who appear in opera houses and concert stages throughout the world as well as on Broadway. He is a faculty member of the Mannes School of Music, has been a vocal consultant at Glimmerglass Opera, the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, Roundabout Theater, as well as the Manhattan School of Music, the Stuttgart Opera House (Germany), and has presented classes at the Metropolitan Opera Guild.

His students include such distinguished artists as Audra MacDonald and Elizabeth Futral, rising Metropolitan Opera stars Yonghoon Lee, William Burden, Hao Jiang Tian, and Broadway luminaries Marin Mazzie, Jason Daniely, Brian Stokes Mitchell, and Lea Michelle. He has also helped prepare stars such as Stockard Channing and Oliver Platt for Broadway role debuts.



Glenn Seven Allen has appeared on Broadway and at major theater, concert and opera venues throughout the US. He recently sang leading roles with American Lyric Theatre's Opera in Eden project; a concert of new American operas supervised by Mark Adamo; The Chocolate Soldier at Bard Summerscape; Rigoletto with Bleecker Street Opera, La traviata with Long Island Opera, Roméo et Juliette and Carmen with New York Lyric Opera, and Bolcom's A View from the Bridge under the supervision of the composer. A champion of new musical and theatrical works, Mr. Allen originated the role of the young hero Giuseppe in Adam Guettel's The Light in the Piazza on Broadway. Other principal Broadway credits include Girl Crazy with City Center Encores and Casino Paradise with Lincoln Center's American Songbook series and Cabaret at Washington's Arena Stage, for which he received The Helen Hayes Award nomination for Best Actor. www.glennsevenallen.com.



Martin Katz Master Class: March 27, 2013. Maestro Katz with pianist Hyerim Song and soprano Yesun Hong.

NYSTA'S NOMINATED OFFICERS *for 2014-2017*



Judith Nicosia (PRESIDENT)

A NYSTA member since 2002, Judith Nicosia is Associate Professor in the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University where she teaches voice, voice pedagogy, and vocal literature classes. She has been an invited clinician at local, regional, and national levels for NATS and ACDA and served as a master teacher at the 2003 NATS Intern Program at SUNY-Fredonia. A specialist in contemporary music, Judith has performed works by Olivier Messiaen, Ned Rorem, Laurie Altman, and Haskell Small with the composers at the piano, and recorded for the Orion, DR, CRI, Albany, and Centaur labels. She has been a guest artist with many chamber groups and has sung opera and oratorio as well. It is her special joy to teach contemporary music to her students and to have them work directly with composers in New York City, such as Chester Biscardi, Richard Hundley, and John Musto.

Judith has happily functioned as NYSTA's Registrar since April 2010, and been delighted to present the classical female voice portion of *Developmental Repertoire for Singers* as part of NYSTA's PDP offerings. She is happy to serve the organization in any way she can, honoring the memory of her teacher, the late Margaret Hoswell, a longtime NYSTA member.



Matthew Hoch (VICE PRESIDENT)

Matthew Hoch has been a member of NYSTA since 2006. Since 2008, he has been Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints: The Official Journal NYSTA*, and was appointed to the office of Vice President in 2012. As a NYSTA board member, he has been an active member of both the PDP and IT committees. Dr. Hoch completed NYSTA's Oren Lathrop Brown Professional Development Program in 2009, becoming the first person ever to finish all five of NYSTA's core curriculum courses entirely online.

Dr. Hoch is currently Assistant Professor of Voice at Auburn University. From 2006–2012, he served as Assistant Professor of Voice at Shorter College, where he also served as Coordinator of Vocal Studies. Dr. Hoch earned a BM degree from Ithaca College with a triple major in vocal performance, music education, and music theory; an MM from The Hartt School with a double major in vocal performance and music history; and a DMA from the New England Conservatory in vocal performance and literature. He lives in Auburn, Alabama, with his wife, Theresa, and three children: Hannah, Sofie, and Zachary.



Benjamin Berman (SECRETARY)

Benjamin J. Berman, tenor, received his MM in vocal performance in 2012 from Rutgers under Judith Nicosia, and his BM (summa cum laude) in 2010, also from Rutgers, under Frederick Urrey. Benjamin is music director of the First Reformed Church of New Brunswick, conductor of the Highland Park Community Chorus, and director of the Rainbow Children's Choir of New Brunswick. He collaborates with Lewis Baratz and the period instrument ensemble La Fiocco as a harpsichordist, and sings with the West Jersey Chamber Music Society in Moorestown, New Jersey.

In recent recitals, Benjamin has sung performances of Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*, Barber's *Hermit Songs*, Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, and Butterworth's *A Shropshire Lad*. Benjamin is active as a recitalist, voice teacher, harpsichordist, and organist in Central New Jersey, and is on the faculty at the Academy of Music in Spotswood. Visit www.benjaminberman.com for updates and information.



Peter Ludwig (TREASURER)

Peter Ludwig is currently treasurer of the NYSTA Board of Directors. A graduate of Juilliard and New York University, Mr. Ludwig has sung principal roles with Vineyard Theater, Encompass Theater, Stonington (ME) Opera Arts, VPR, Pensacola Opera, Chattanooga Opera, Rockland Opera, and others. He has been a soloist at Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, the 92nd Street Y, Austrian Cultural Forum, the Actors Studio, and other venues in the United States, Italy, and Switzerland.

Mr. Ludwig maintains a voice studio in New York City. In past seasons, he taught workshops and master classes for singers and actors in Greece. He has also taught at the 92nd Street Y and at LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts, where he directed the Opera Workshop; many of his students are now pursuing distinguished performing careers. www.ludwigsinging.com.



Elizabeth Saunders (REGISTRAR)

As chair of the Events Committee for NYSTA, Elizabeth Saunders has spearheaded NYSTA's events planning, bringing master classes and workshops of the highest caliber to the association's worldwide membership. She is a classically-trained singer who has performed principal roles in concert and opera throughout the United States and in Germany, Japan, and Italy before re-training for musical theater and moving to New York in 2011. Elizabeth also has a great love of exploratory and avant-garde vocal music and takes delight in working with singers who are preparing this type of music. In 2010, she was selected by MacArthur "Genius Grant" recipient composer Anthony Braxton to participate in his "Trillium" recordings, and is currently recording more than fifty of Charles Ives' solo works for the Ives Vocal Marathon, a six-concert series of his complete songs that has been presented in concerts around the Northeast since 2005. She received her BM degree in vocal arts from the University of Southern California and her Artist Diploma in opera performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. In addition to her private studio, Elizabeth has also trained young professionals for the New National Theater Tokyo's Young Artist Training Program, and has taught private voice and given master classes at Trinity College, Hartford.

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