

# VOICE*Prints*

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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2008



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### Featured Event:

CATHERINE MALFITANO  
*Master Class*

AND

ANNUAL  
*Holiday Party*

**December 7, 2008**

Sunday, 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

The incomparable Catherine Malfitano, whose formidable vocal and dramatic talents are world renowned, will guide young professionals in operatic repertoire, followed by our usual holiday good cheer.

We are seeking four young artists and an alternate to participate in this masterclass. If you have students who are at a very advanced level, this is an extraordinary opportunity. Please have them submit their resumes by November 21<sup>st</sup> to Josephine Mongiardo at [vicepresident@nyst.org](mailto:vicepresident@nyst.org) or you may use the "Submit Student Form" on the NYSTA Members page on our website: [www.nyst.org](http://www.nyst.org).

**Laurie Beecham Theater at the West Bank Café**  
407 West 42nd Street, NYC (*just west of 9th Avenue*).

Free to members and one guest, \$25 non-members, \$15 students with valid ID.

**Please Note** there is limited seating for this event so reservations are required and will be given out on a first-come, first-serve basis. Members use the RSVP form located on the NYSTA website (Member's Log In page). Non-members must purchase tickets on the NYSTA website (Events page).



## OREN LATHROP BROWN *Professional Development Program*

### Singer's Developmental Repertoire

**November 1, 2008**

Saturday, 9:00 AM - 6:30 PM

9:00 AM-1:00 PM

The Male Classical Voice  
with **Dr. Christopher Arneson**

2:30 PM-6:30 PM

The Female Classical Voice  
with **Judith Nicosia**



Dr. Christopher Arneson



Judith Nicosia

**November 2, 2008**

Sunday, 9:00 AM - 6:30 PM

9:00 AM-1:00 PM

Musical Theatre Repertoire  
with **David Sabella-Mills**

2:30 PM-6:30 PM

Musical Theatre Repertoire  
with **Jeannette LoVetri**



David Sabella-Mills



Jeannette LoVetri

Selecting appropriate repertoire for students can be a major challenge for teachers of singing.

This course specifies criteria for musical, technical, interpretive, and stylistic demands that teachers can use to analyze a particular work's appropriateness for students at various levels of development. Specific songs and arias will be recommended and studied.

**Teachers' College, Columbia University**

120th Street, between Broadway & Amsterdam Avenue, NYC.

## MESSAGE FROM THE *President*



### WEATHERING THE STORM

Hello Dear Colleagues;

I hope this letter finds you well and in good spirits. For my part, it's been a rough two months since my last president's letter. The start of a new school year, a heated presidential race, devastating weather patterns, and an economic crisis unlike anything this country has seen since the great depression has heightened the stress levels for most all my students (and their parents), starting this semester off on shaky ground. There is definitely an air of uncertainty, as families all across the country struggle with tuition payments, housing costs and extracurricular lesson payments for their high school and younger age children, which may, if it hasn't already, lead to a certain amount of attrition in the private studio, and therefore enhance our own stress levels.

All this got me thinking. In these most stressful times, with many financial institutions falling faster than a *soufflé* at a performance of STOMP, the very core of why we do what we do may seem unclear to our students, their parents, and even ourselves. And, now more than ever, we may need to be the torchbearers of creativity, artistry, and freedom of expression. The last time I can remember such a similar, and uncertain, time was after September 11, 2001. At that time, in an effort to reassure and bolster my student's shaken egos and ids, I sent an email to my entire roster which, much to my surprise, made its way around the internet in swift fashion and was even published in a national theater newspaper called *Backstage*. Though the circumstances of our current, national, crisis are certainly different, we have heard the current situation called the "economic 9/11." So, with your indulgence, I'd like to share that letter with you now.

September 11, 2001

*Today, I was supposed to start the fall semester, teaching vocal technique at NYU/CAP21. I woke up around eight, started the coffee, walked the dogs, showered. Then all hell broke loose. We all watched in horror as our country was shaken to its core. School was canceled, of course.*

*So now I sit here wondering how I will walk into class in the coming days and work on "lovely little musical theater ditties" when our country and the world is still reeling in the aftermath of this tragedy, and will be for a long time to come. Is there a place for musical comedy now? How can there be? How can we laugh now? How can we SING? Then I was reminded of something my most beloved mentor (Marie Traficante) once said to me (paraphrased here).*

*At the end of W.W.II, one of the first types of buildings to be rebuilt in Europe were the theaters. The morale of the people was held at*

*a high premium. A place to congregate and leave behind the tensions and strife of the day was of utmost importance to the fabric of society. In a time of strife what WE do becomes VERY IMPORTANT. We are the morale officers in this crisis. We are the guardians of light when the darkness is creeping closer. So sing, my darlings. Sing your hearts out. Sing on the streets. SING WITH A PURPOSE. Make one person a day smile with your joy and we will win the war. SING, ACT, DANCE, HONE YOUR CRAFT, COMMUNICATE YOUR JOY AND SPREAD THE LIGHT.*

*That's how I plan to get through this. Just thought I would share it with you all. Love and PEACE, David Sabella(-Mills)*

Sentimentality of the day aside, I believe the same could be said of today. As students, both young and old, question their artistic, and career, choices (and tighten their wallets), we must remind them of the beauty and worthiness of simply singing to feel better, and/or to make others feel better. There is an undeniable joy in the act of singing that, in these times, can work more wonders than a sudden surge in the DOW of 800 points. And, while we all strive to uphold our artistic, professional, and/or academic standards, let us not forget to teach into the soul of each student and let the music work its wonders as only it can.

Sometimes it's doesn't have to be about the upcoming jury performance, or the audition. Sometimes it can just be for fun! And, sometimes, it doesn't have to be with the perfect resonance balance, registration, or breath management. Sometimes it can just BE, because that fills the soul and repairs the fragile id, which just wants to sing for fun anyway. Sure, the ego (of both student and teacher) wants to get it right and receive the big ovations and paychecks. But the id (inside the kid) just wants to pretend, get away from it all, and have fun. And, in these troubling times I suggest that should be OK too. So, while I continue to be ever vigilant in the development of my student's technical abilities and academic or career requirements, I am also very aware that an ounce of praise and encouragement may be worth more than a pound of technical beauty or correctness.

Also, as teachers (and singers), we must ask ourselves "What fills up my soul? What makes me feel better in (and about) my chosen career?" For some, it may be taking some time to sing in your own studio, to dust off that aria or song you haven't sung thru in a few weeks (or years) and reapply your efforts, creatively, artistically, happily. For others, it can be attending a particularly inspiring performance.

Or, re-energizing our research into the science of voice and developing our own pedagogy. And still for others, it may be a long awaited rest in the form of a vacation or "staycation." No matter how you may choose to relieve the stress in your life, dear members, please remember to do so. For as I am sure you know, only a full cup can overflow.

Personally, it is my study of NYSTA's PDP *Core Curriculum* that continues to fill my soul and engage my mind in new and energizing ways. After completing the *Core Curriculum*, there is no more guess work for me, but rather informed strategizing (which can actually lead to fun), no more mystery in the "how to," and more important, the "when to" in a student's developmental timetable. And, when that is truly clear both the singular day and the long term process are indeed more fun and engaging for both teacher and student.

As teachers, we may be very aware of how to set up our students for success in both short term and long term goals. In these overtly stressful times I would suggest that we remember to set ourselves up for success as well. Whatever that means for you, be sure to give yourself the tools (and gifts) you need to successfully weather the storm ahead. Reading *VOICEPrints*, or the *NATS Journal of Singing*, or enrolling in a NYSTA PDP course, can offer you a welcome respite from the day, enhance your career, and recharge your batteries all at the same time. And now, with NYSTA's PDP courses offered both on-site and online, it's never been easier to gain insight and mastery in these subjects. The enhancement to your pedagogy and practice will be palpable. The replenishment to your soul will become evident. And, you might even have some fun.

In whatever way you choose to recharge your batteries and relieve the stress, I wish you all the best in weathering the storm, and as always, I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and courses. THANK YOU for your continued support of NYSTA. Your membership is truly valued.



PS: Many of you have contacted me with congratulations regarding our newest addition. One sad event to report is that our little 6 month old boy (Jaden), whom we had been fostering since he was 6 days old, and had hoped to adopt, was unexpectedly and suddenly reunited with a kinship resource within his biological family. We miss him terribly, of course (beyond words really). But, so far, we continue to have a good relationship with this kinship resource and hope to see Jaden as much as possible in the future. As the saying goes, "That which does not kill us..."

*David Sabella-Mills*

# NYSTACalendar 2008-2009

## OREN LATHROP BROWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM \*

### SINGER'S *Developmental Repertoire*

**November 1, 2008** Saturday, 9:00 AM - 6:30 PM  
 9:00 AM-1:00 PM The Male Classical Voice with Dr. Christopher Arneson  
 2:30 PM-6:30 PM The Female Classical Voice with Judith Nicosia

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## OREN LATHROP BROWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM \*

### VOCAL HEALTH FOR *Voice Professionals*

**January 13-March 3, 2009**, Tuesdays, 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM

In this course, students closely examine vocal health issues relevant to singers and teachers of singing. Vocal fold injury, including the mechanisms of vocal pathologies, their diagnosis and treatment, will be addressed. Common conditions such as nodules, polyps, edema, reflux, and hemorrhage will also be covered. The goal of the course is to enable teachers to advise students on vocal hygiene, to recognize the necessity of medical intervention, to be conversant with commonly used drugs for performers, and to be able to participate as part of the medical treatment team in the rehabilitation of the singing voice.

Instructors: Dr. Peek Woo, Dr. Lucian Sulica, Dr. Anat Keider, Dr. Benjamin Asher, Dr. Linda Caroll

**Teachers' College**, Columbia University, 120th Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, NYC.

## SIXTEEN BAR *Clinic*

**February 9, 2009** Monday, 6:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Back by popular demand, twelve singers get to strut their stuff before a panel of industry experts who give candid and supportive advice often not offered in the audition setting.

**New York University**, Kimmel Center, 60 Washington Square South, Shorin Performance Space, 8<sup>th</sup> floor, NYC.

Photo ID required. Free to members, \$25 non-members, \$15 students with valid ID.

## ACCESSING *The Inner Divo/Div*

**April 19, 2009** Sunday, 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Understanding the psychology of performance can aid a voice teacher to take a student to the next level. NLP Practitioner and Certified NGH Hypnotist Sarah Carson and NLP Master Practitioner and Trainer, Certified NGH Hypnotist and Certified Clean Language Facilitator Shawn Carson will outline cutting edge techniques of peak performance psychology in the singing arena drawn from the disciplines of Humanistic Neuro-Linguistic Psychology, NLP, EFT Hypnosis and Clean Language.

**Teachers' College**, Columbia University, Room TBA, 120<sup>th</sup> Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, NYC.

Photo ID required. Free to members, \$25 non-members, \$15 students with valid ID.

## OREN LATHROP BROWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM \*

### COMPARATIVE *Pedagogy Weekend 2009*

**June 2009** Dates and Instructors TBA

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.

**Teachers' College**, Columbia University, 120th Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, NYC.

- \* All PDP courses are \$220 and can be registered and paid for online at [www.nyst.org](http://www.nyst.org). One graduate credit per course is available from Westminster Choir College, for an additional \$150. A form will be obtained at the class. The courses take place at Columbia University, Teachers' College, 525 West 120th Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, NYC. Check desk at entry for class location. For more information contact Janet Pranschke at [pdp@nyst.org](mailto:pdp@nyst.org) or [www.nyst.org](http://www.nyst.org).

## SINGING HEALTHY *Over the Holidays*

by NYSTA Member Peak Woo, MD, FACS

Singers must travel in flocks. How else can one explain the timeliness of their requests for visits to the throat doctor over the holidays? It's never on the holiday. No! It's always before. About four weeks to a week before sounds about right. Having just gotten through the Jewish High Holidays, I can attest to the rush by the Cantors through the office. One needed a shot, one wanted a spray, and one wanted a check-up. We can expect a similar rush of baritones, tenors and sopranos around the time leading to the Christmas season, right before all the Handel *Messiahs* open. You can set the season by it, much as one can set the fall season by the return of New Yorkers to the Upper East and West Side from the Hamptons or the migration of students back to Boston when I did my residency there.

To the casual observer, one would perhaps expect a more gradual transition, such as early September when singers are back in New York, or after the holidays when the voice imperfections are now past due for investigation. No, it's like clockwork: *before* the holidays. One must surmise that it has something to do with the singing teachers and the singers preparing for the holidays. Yes, it's an exciting time to be a singer, but sometimes it is also a time of high anxiety. Sometimes, it's just too much: Voice problems! Hoarse voice! Can't go on! Call the doctor!

Perhaps it is worth a few minutes to ponder the issues of why and how singers get out of good vocal health during these times. As a singing teacher, you need to be on guard and advise your students and mentor them during this period of heightened stress and anxiety. Your mind must be sharp, your ears finely tuned for possible vocal problems related to health of the vocal instrument.

The purpose of this brief essay is to review some of the common vocal signs and symptoms that may signal health issues surrounding singing over the holidays. I will make some common-sense suggestions to avoid physical vocal injury and mental distress. In New York, especially this year, we all need less stress over the holidays!

I know I could never be a singer, even if I had the talent. No way *would* I do it! Let me do 100 operations in a week instead! It takes extreme courage to bare the soul and fling the emotion through the voice into the air. It is at once an act of heroism and daring supported by bellicose confidence. This apparent bravado shrouds an inner

sanctum of terror. I know it, I hear it, and I feel it every time a Metropolitan Opera star comes in for a consultation. Even when a singer has successfully sung a piece a hundred times, he or she fears that they are only one performance away from infamy and dismay. It is no wonder that singers are ethereal creatures that live for the moment. That is the way we want singers! If the singer had the temperament of a banker or an accountant, would we want to hear them? When the vocal apparatus is in excellent shape and the mental and physical capacity of the singer is in alignment, we never hear from them. However, whenever there is the least abnormality in the vocal apparatus, morbid fear and anxiety is the norm. They want a check-up and they want it now! This could explain why there is such a rush around the holidays.

One reason the vocal mechanism is more prone to break down over the holidays is that there is a lot more singing done during the holiday season. I don't see many people singing during Washington's Birthday. (That is when I take my holiday—low demand for services, safe to go away). Joyous singing events over the holiday season are usually taken on by singers with some training. But, more often than not, they are not professionals.

It is axiomatic that most singers who get in trouble during the holidays are not professionals. Professionals have real illnesses, the others are more likely to have vocal problems related to their heightened vocal demands. Why? Their holiday singing is done under more pressure to do well than a standard recital or voice lesson. There is usually a specific piece that is being rehearsed over and over again prior to the big event. It is probably these repetitive rehearsals led by directors, producers, choral directors, conductors that are most likely to cause difficulties with the voice. Many of these well-intentioned musicians may not know a singer's voice; their goal may be to obtain the best possible coordination of acoustics, artistry, coloration, or effect. The singer's vocal health is the furthest thing from their minds. It has been estimated that a full-length opera may require the vocal folds to vibrate over a million times! Try doing that at six hundred times to a thousand times per second! That's what the vocal folds are doing during that coveted high C. If during the rehearsal, too many attempts are made to achieve that high C, the result may be a disaster called phono-trauma.

Phono-trauma is the mechanical production of traumatic injury to the vocal fold secondary to excessive number of vibrations or excessive collision force of the vocal folds during vocal fold vibrations. The main culprit for phono-trauma is too aggressive a vocal attack which can result in shearing of the vocal folds so as to produce vocal fold swelling, inflammation and bleeding. Inadequate lubrication associated with too little preparation and warm-up is another cause. When the voice is not adequately supported, laryngeal mechanisms suffer during phonation because of aggressive use of pressure to drive the vocal fold into oscillation. The increased lung pressure is transmitted to the delicate vocal fold that results in excessive shearing forces on the vocal folds. Too much phono-trauma may result in vocal fold swelling, hemorrhage, vocal fold nodules, and vocal fold polyps. (see *Figures 1 and 2*)

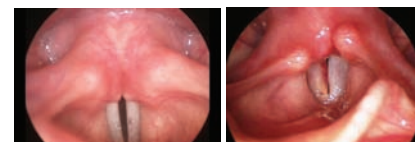


Figure 1

Figure 2

Sometimes this occurs because of sustained trauma and swelling without proper vocal rest and allowance for restoration of normal function. Sometimes, all the energy to the muscles is used up again and again, resulting in an asthenic, tired voice. The singer who presents to the physician for evaluation of voice problems may not have a hoarse voice. This may seem dichotomous—why else would the singer be there if the voice was not hoarse? Because the singer sings mostly by kinesthetic feel, something that doesn't feel right may be the only indication that the voice is not at its best. For the singer to articulate these feelings to a non-singer, especially a physician may be a challenge. Most ear, nose and throat doctors do not know the difference of a *passaggio* from a pizza! Here are few symptoms the singers may complain of before they have audible hoarseness.

Almost uniformly, when the voice is not right, high soft singing in a legato voice is difficult to absent. The singer often has to use more effort to achieve the same note or quality. Sometimes, attempting the high soft singing is preceded by a hissing or air escape before the vocal folds are approximated and produce a bell-like quality. This early breathiness to the voice before the onset of the voice can be exaggerated by asking the singer to do rapid staccato type singing in a high soft voice. If there is swelling or poor vocal fold approximation,



high soft singing will be affected. This should be one of the earliest indications that can be used by singers as well as singing teachers to test the health of the vocal folds during vocal warm-up.

Another common feature of a voice that is having difficulty is the presence of a voice break. A break in the voice could be just a brief break-down of the steady oscillation of the vocal folds during a pitch glide or during a *mesa di voce*. If the singer is having vocal instability during a soft pitch glide or a voice break occurs during a loud to soft phonation gesture, it could be a sign of excessive vocal fold muscle fatigue or vocal fold swelling. Almost uniformly, such a voice break can be overcome by more breath pressure and a harder attack. That is how the singer usually compensates for this difficulty.

Unfortunately, such an approach results in a spiraling cycle of increasing phonotrauma from increased pressure, causing increased collision forces on the vocal folds. High collision forces cause more and further organic injury to the vocal folds. More swelling and injury then result in more difficulty in the ability to produce the desired sound. This starts the spiral downward of continued voice loss until an impasse is reached when even gentle simple singing is impossible, resulting in consultation in a doctor's office.

A third feature of voice complaint associated with vocal fold swelling is that a voice has lost its brilliance: the singer often describes singing "through a muffler" or they sense a veiled quality to their voice. This lack of brilliance, ring or ping may be subtle and is often attributed to vocal pedagogical or technical singing issues such as tongue tension, jaw position, laryngeal position, laryngeal height, or the openness of the vocal tract. This may be true. However, in the accomplished singer with established good vocal technique, a veiled quality to voice without an antecedent history of viral illness or throat swelling should be taken seriously. Sometimes, a swelling of the edge of the vocal fold due to a dilated vessel can cause a previously well warmed-up voice to lose its brilliance after just a short period of singing.

If the vocal folds have not had enough rest after heavy singing, resumption of practice and florid singing may result in vocal fold edema. Vocal fold edema is excessive fluid that has accumulated in the margin of the vocal fold after previous heavy singing. Because the vocal folds are a bit heavier with fluid, the singer may complain of a lowered fundamental frequency during speaking or singing. This may sound like when the patient comes down with a cold. This could explain why

many singers say they had a viral illness or cold before the voice deteriorated. The easy-to-reach head voice now sounds very chesty and, the speaking voice may have a vocal fry quality.

For the singer to sing the same piece, the music must sometimes be transposed downward. The singer describes having to push in order to sing. When singing with the vocal folds swollen, register transitions are especially problematic. The seamless *passaggio* so prized in *bel canto* singing becomes an effort. Indeed, when the vocal folds are swollen, voice production during register transition is especially problematic. Thus, as the singer prepares for singing with five-tone ascending or descending scales, there may be a large hole in the vocal range, accompanied by either voice breaks or lack of resonance. To overcome this problem, certain singing techniques may be brought to bear to shape the vocal tract so as to amplify the desired sound and mask the difficulty. Too much effort using intrinsic or extrinsic muscles of the larynx to shape this sound can result in further difficulties—pain with singing, localized tenderness, sensation of swelling in the neck, and further reduction in singing ability.

If the vocal folds are asked to perform beyond their performance limits, swelling and injury will result in a course of inflammation and repair. When the vocal folds are inflamed, there is excessive mucous production. The mucus is often thick and lacks lubrication. The singer will often be feeling dryness with an inability to clear thick phlegm from the edge of the vocal folds. When he clears his throat, he is able to clear the mucus from the vocal fold. The voice returns for a brief period of time and vibrates obediently, only to be replaced by more phlegm with singing which then requires another clearing effort by cough. This repetitive cough and clearing of the throat may result in further injury to the throat.

An experienced singing teacher uses the above signs and symptoms to guide his or her students. Sometimes, just by listening to the voice of their students over the telephone, teachers have a good clue as to the status and the vocal health of their students. Knowing when to ease up on the voice so as to give the natural healing powers of the body a chance to work is an important role of the teacher. It is a fact: the person who knows the singer's voice best is his singing teacher.

Singing healthy over the holidays is hard. This is because the healthy singing voice is by nature, lazy. The body must be well rested, the mind must be at ease, the vocal folds must be gently warmed up, and the vocal tract well hydrated. These physiologic



**Dr. Peak Woo** is a board certified otolaryngologist specializing in laryngology (voice and throat disorders). His main interest is in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the throat. During his 25 years in academic medicine, he spear-headed

the development of the computerized videostroboscope and the high-speed video imaging system, now standard for imaging of vocal fold vibration. He also developed some novel applications of office lasers for treatment of disease of the throat. As a leader in his field, Dr. Woo is frequently asked to give courses and talks nationally and internationally on topics of phonsurgery, laser surgery, voice diagnosis and office intervention for voice disorders. At Mount Sinai, he was director of the Grabscheid Voice Center from 1996 to 2008. In 2008, he opened his private practice with a focus on laryngology and voice disorders. Dr. Woo remains Clinical Professor of Otolaryngology at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. Please visit his website at [www.peakwoo.com](http://www.peakwoo.com).

demands for good health in singing are difficult to meet in the best of times. During the holidays, the stress related to time compression often results in lack of sleep, poor eating habits, and excessive practice. Burning the candle on both ends is one of the reasons why we see even well-adjusted singers crash and burn over the holidays. We encourage singers to know their own voice and to have a routine for monitoring their voice during warm-up. A mental check list by the singer of the status of his vocal health during warm-up is one that most professional vocalists develop so as to gauge the status of their vocal apparatus. This check list has been described to me by pop singers and classical singers. They then gauge their efforts appropriately, working within bounds set by their vocal folds. How else could they be professionals! Much as a pilot makes a systems check of his airplane before takeoff, a singer should have some basic tools to check on his voice before undertaking heavy, sustained singing. This is where good singing teachers are invaluable in preparing their singers. If things are not right, it is best to back off the heavy singing and moderate voice use so as to avoid vocal injury. If the singer does not heed early warning signs of vocal fold injury, permanent injury such as vocal fold

polyp, hemorrhage, or scar may occur. Taking the analogy from flying a step further, one needs to avoid problems such as the death spiral, crash-and-burn, unsafe ejection, and failure of takeoff in the voice arena as much as one needs to avoid similar scenarios when flying.

When singers ask me what they can do during the holidays to avoid vocal injury, I offer a few recurrent themes. For the holidays, I ask them to remember the following simple axioms.

From many seasoned phoniaticians and otolaryngologists before me, I learned to subscribe to the mantra of: **"SING WET, PEE PALE!"** It is well known that vocal folds stand up far better to phono-trauma when they oscillate in a well-lubricated, slippery environment. The best source of lubrication is the saliva glands above and below the vocal folds. For them to work well, they must be well hydrated, not be shut down by anxiety, and not be over-depleted. That means good hydration, rest, and good mucosal hygiene habits. Though there are pharmacological methods to improve hydration, most are not necessary. Simple hydration followed by reduction in anxiety, adequate rest between heavy singing, and occasional stimulation by a lemon or glycerin throat drop is all that is necessary. It is helpful to be aware of the environment and the humidity of the performance arena and to take steps to provide extra humidification if necessary.

Every day, the body supplies a certain reserve for good voice. It may translate into 10,000 to ten million vibrations. Know your body, know your instrument. Do not go beyond. Each day the voice should be spent like money spent during retirement:

**SPEND THE INTEREST, NOT THE**

**CAPITAL.** Listen to your body. On some days, you will not have the same reserve. If you are not well, marking or moderate singing or brief voice rest coupled with sleep may do wonders to restore natural immune status and vocal health.

**SING FAT, EAT LEAN.** "Fat singing" is singing with a well-rested body. The great Lilly Lehman recommended singing only for a brief time during a concentrated, but uncluttered, period of each day. No singing too late, too early or too often. Do luxurious warm-ups and cool-downs. Your vocal folds will thank you. During the holidays, reflux laryngitis and heartburn are more prevalent. This is because of the abundance of parties, food, and alcohol. If you are a starving artist, it is tempting to have that extra-spicy tuna roll at the office party. Avoid it, eat like a king during breakfast, a prince for lunch and a pauper for dinner. Avoid singing on a full stomach. Keeping stomach contents from spilling lunch onto the vocal folds during evening singing is a good thing. Your vocal folds will thank you and reward you with many more healthy vibrations.

If you are being paid for singing—and we all hope you are—be aware that your voice is a treasure. It is what is paying for the rent, the dinner, the lessons... **GET PAID FOR YOUR SINGING, NOT FOR YOUR SPEECH AFTER.**

No one will really care if you are vivacious after a brilliant performance. Make an appearance, do the courtesy, but be selfish, curb your euphoria and vocal exuberance after the performance. Watch the alcohol and late night celebrations! You were generous during the performance. Now you are your own vocal chords' Protector and Champion. Take that mantle.

The relationship of the singer to his vocal folds is deeply personal. Some singers personify the relationship, almost akin to a lover, child or a confidant in the best of times, to a rival or enemy during the worst of times. As Blanche Dubois said in *A Street Car Named Desire*: "We all depend on the kindness of strangers." That is the way some singers must treat their vocal fold apparatus on days when the will is there but the vocal system is not. Similarly, on days of indisposition, think of your poor vocal folds, they are but two pieces of delicate, pale flesh, never having seen the sun, toiling on command of their master—a stranger—hundreds of millions times a year, never asking for a day off, depending on only the kindness of their master, a stranger, to tend to their health. During the holidays, extend the spirit of generosity to your partner, your vocal folds, be kind. To all my wonderful friends in the singing community, I wish for you a healthy season filled with high Cs!

*Peak Woo, MD, FACS*

*Figure 1: A dilated small varicose vein in a classical singer that caused vocal fatigue with singing.*

*Figure 2: A more serious dilated vessel verging on a polyp in a jazz singer.*

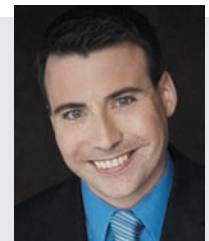
**Dr. Peak Woo** will be teaching "Vocal Health for Voice Professionals" this year's Oren Lathrop Brown Professional Development Program. The course begins on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and is available in three formats: on-site, online, or on-demand. Enroll today at [www.nyst.org](http://www.nyst.org).

## MESSAGE FROM THE *Editor*

One of my privileges as Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints* is to extend a personal welcome to each and every new member of NYSTA. Not only has membership been growing by leaps and bounds, but NYSTA has also truly achieved national and international status. Since our last issue, we have welcomed new members the west coast, Germany, and Australia. Even though anxiety does loom large in our everyday life (as David Sabella-Mills eloquently articulates in this month's President's Letter), it is somewhat comforting to remember the fact that NYSTA is entering a very exciting period in its history.

We are blessed to have a DOUBLE feature article this month by Dr. Peak Woo. Dr. Woo has been an integral part of NYSTA through his presence as a principal instructor in the Oren Lathrop Brown Professional Development Program. Beginning in January, he will once again be presenting lectures in the biennial "Vocal Health for Voice Professionals" course, offered on-site, online, and on demand. If you are new to NYSTA or have never participated in the PDP program, perhaps Dr. Woo's excellent article will entice you to take advantage of this opportunity.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone for their warm welcome and their compliments for the September/October issue. Remember, as a NYSTA member *VOICEPrints* is YOUR publication, so please send all questions, comments, and ideas for future articles to me at [voiceprints@nyst.org](mailto:voiceprints@nyst.org).



*Dr. Matthew Hoch*

## NYSTA *New Members*



**Lisa Sain Odom** holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Vocal Performance from the University of South Carolina and is a member of the music faculty of Clemson University. In addition to her work at

Clemson, she has served on the music faculties of North Greenville University and Western Carolina University. She is an accomplished performer and has appeared with orchestras and opera companies including the South Carolina Philharmonic, Foothills Philharmonic, and Spartanburg Repertory Theatre. As a concert soloist, Dr. Odom's appearances include Mozart's *Missa Brevis* with the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria; Ophelia in Thomas' *Hamlet* with the South Carolina Philharmonic, and a recital with Opera Carolina. She is also part of the soprano trio, "A Blonde, a Brunette and a Redhead," currently performing in concert throughout the Southeast. In 2006, she was a National Association of Teachers of Singing Intern and has worked with acclaimed teachers of both classical and contemporary vocal pedagogy including Robert Edwin, Jeannette LoVetri and Donald Simonson.



**Anna Winthrop** is an actress, vocalist, pianist, dancer and writer who is passionate about education in the arts. Anna has taught vocal technique as an adjunct instructor at New York University and currently

teaches through her private vocal studio. Anna holds a BM in classical voice from Oberlin Conservatory where she studied both voice and piano, receiving Phi Kappa Lambda honors for both academic and musical excellence. She also holds an MM in vocal performance with a concentration in musical theater from New York University, where she was awarded the Jan Peerce Fellowship. Anna's professional work encompasses musical theater, straight theater, opera, television, film and voice-overs. She was presented with an award from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts for outstanding vocal achievement. Anna is a member of Actors Equity Association and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. For more information, please visit [www.annawinthrop.com](http://www.annawinthrop.com).

**Sophie Lair-Berreby** takes care of the singing voice. After training as an SLP in Lyon (France) under the celebrated Guy Cornut, she worked in Paris for 11 years, collaborating with Elizabeth Fresnel of the Laboratoire de la

Voix and other leading laryngologists. She established her New York practice this year. Her patients have performed at l'Opéra de Paris, the Metropolitan Opera, Glimmerglass Opera Festival, Carnegie Hall, on Broadway, and in jazz clubs throughout the world. Mme. Lair-Berreby treats the entire artist—singing voice and speaking voice, performer and person—because all aspects are part of the instrument. Herself a mezzo-soprano (in France, with the Choeur de l'Orchestre de Paris and in New York with the Dessoff Symphonic Choir), she also helps singers with French diction. She can be reached at [lair.sophie@gmail.com](mailto:lair.sophie@gmail.com)



**Rosalie Kaplan** is a recent graduate of New York University's Gallatin School, having transferred from the New England Conservatory of Music, where she designed a degree incorporating vocal performance, education, and writing. Her teaching aspirations stem from her formidable instructors and her immutable belief in the universal truths of the art of singing. She is pursuing the development of a studio and is composing a volume of essays discussing the transcendental properties of the human voice. A *soubrette* soprano, Ms. Kaplan enjoys collaborating with composers and has premiered several new compositions. She also loves chamber music, particularly of the Baroque era. Rosalie is delighted to become part of NYSTA's blooming community and hopes to contribute and learn much as a member. She currently resides in Park Slope.

**Kari Ragan** holds a BM and MM from Indiana University and a DMA from the University of Washington. She has taught at the University of Puget Sound and Blackpool Performing Arts in England as well as maintaining a private



studio for over twenty years. Dr. Ragan currently resides in Seattle where she is a frequent performer, adjudicator and workshop presenter.

An active member of the Northwest Voice Foundation and Puget Sound NATS, she is currently the secretary of her local chapter. Dr. Ragan continues an active performance career. She has performed with the Fort Collins Symphony, Helena Symphony, Washington East Opera, Spokane Opera, Spokane Symphony, Lyric Opera Northwest and Opera Idaho. In addition, she is a frequent recitalist, having recently presented a series of recitals throughout the Pacific Northwest, with Maestro Dean Williamson at the piano. Please visit her website at [www.KariRagan.com](http://www.KariRagan.com).



**Michaela Egloff** began her musical education at an early age, singing small roles on the stage of the Freiburger Stadttheater when she was thirteen. She later studied voice with Maria Zahlten-Hall and Lotte Lehman, earning degrees at

the Pädagogische Hochschule in Freiburg. In 1990, she began her career as a professional singer and actor, touring Germany and Europe in *Fiddler on the Roof* (Chava and Zeitel) and *Die Fledermaus* (Adele). She also performed roles in many other operettas by Strauss and Offenbach. Ms. Egloff currently studies voice with Heidemarie Tiemann.

An active member of the German Voice Teacher's Association (the Bundesverband Deutscher Gesandspädagogen—aka the "BDG"), she currently teaches a full studio of private students and conducts at the University in Freiburg. She is very excited to be joining NYSTA and taking advantage of its resources from the other side of the globe. Visit her website at [www.operettencocktail.de](http://www.operettencocktail.de).



# VOICEPrints

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360 West 34th Street, Townhouse #3  
New York, NY 10001

[www.NYST.org](http://www.NYST.org)



Catherine Malfitano



Dr. Peak Woo

## NYSTANews



**Sally Morgan** announces the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition release the *Morganix Method™ Sing Like You Speak: Simply and Naturally*. The human body, barring congenital defect or system-altering accident, is a perfect vocal

instrument from the moment of birth. As emerging research improves our understanding of the acoustics, mechanics and neurological function of the vocal apparatus, the rules of the speaking voice and singing voice blend into one. The vocal instrument works quite brilliantly on its own. The singer's job is to learn how to stay out of the way as your instrument does the job it was designed to do—simply and naturally!

The *Morganix Method™* is used as a text at the University of Texas/Austin. Vocal teacher certification in the *Morganix Method™* January 16-17, 2009 in New York City.

**The Dickens Victorian Carollers** are seeking seasoned, "legit" performers to perform in upscale venues in NYC and area. They entertain at private parties, corporate parties,

promotional work and almost any other venue you can think of! They have been in business for 25 years, and have performed at the White House for three administrations. They are also grateful to have sung in almost every major venue in NYC. Last year, they were featured in a *USA Today* article on Professional Carollers.

The Dickens Victorian Carollers is an SATB quartet. All voice types are sought. Singers must sight read very well, be professional in every aspect, and have a happy disposition. Please send picture and resume (in a Word or PDF file) to [tomandolara@aol.com](mailto:tomandolara@aol.com). No calls, please. Singers will be paid. This is a very lovely job for the right person! Please check out our website at [www.Carollers.com](http://www.Carollers.com).



**Gerald Ginsburg's** song cycle *Earth Tones* will be premiered by soprano Beatrice Broadwater at Weill Recital Hall on Saturday, December 6, 2008 at 8:30 PM. The composer will accompany his cycle. Mr. Ginsburg, who became a poet at age 74, has been published four times (and recorded twice) by The International Library of Poetry and Noble

House Publishers, most recently in "The Best Poems and Poets of 2007." For information, please contact [gerginmus@aol.com](mailto:gerginmus@aol.com).



Just in time for the Holidays, **Marni Nixon** is pleased to announce the release of her latest Christmas Song, entitled "My Christmas Card to You." To read all about it, please go to [www.emstonemusicpublishing.com](http://www.emstonemusicpublishing.com).

### VOICEPrints Erratum:

In the September-October issue of *VOICEPrints*, we celebrated the fact that NYSTA Past-President **Jeannette LoVetri** was appointed to the position of Instructor in the Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery at the Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. However, there was a misprint in the title of her position: Ms. LoVetri is an Instructor in the Department of Otolaryngology (not an Instructor of Otolaryngology). Ms. LoVetri is not offering instruction in otolaryngologic or other medicine in any way. NYSTA regrets the error.