

# Balanced Music School

## February Wrap-Up and March Happenings!

February is gone, however short, and now we must look ahead to recital and show season!

-One of our students, William, is in *Annie* at Panther Creek High School. Let's go support him! Times and ticket prices TBD.

-There's a wonderful and FREE "Mindful Voice" workshop that includes voice, breathing, and yoga based exercises that Bizzy is going to. Check here for tickets: <http://raleigh.eventful.com/events/mindful-voice-/E0-001-120517091-7>

-Regional NATS is in Towson, Maryland at Towson University. The high school day is March 23. We suggest getting a hotel that Friday evening the 22<sup>nd</sup> to prevent having to drive 6 hours early in the morning the day of your audition. More info to come!

-We're planning an Alexander Masterclass with master teacher Suzanne Faulkner on March 29 and 30. Friday the 29<sup>th</sup> is college and Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup> is high school. Both are open to the public and we encourage you to bring friends and colleagues you think may be interested in the technique or lessons with us.

-Both Bizzy and Claire are in the ensemble of the Durham Savoyards production of *The Mikado*! Come out and see some Gilbert and Sullivan March 28-31!

-It's recital season at UNC-Chapel Hill and Tommy is playing for most of them! Check UNC's music department calendar for all the dates and times! <https://music.unc.edu/events/concert-series/studentrecitals/>

## Our Favorite Online Resources!

The internet is full of both helpful and incorrect things. Because of this, we don't always approve of lectures, technical videos, and workshops that students find on their own. However, we have found some favorites that we come back to consistently. Check them out if you have the time!

-UNC Music Department Youtube Page is a wealth of information and credible performances. Check out these 3 masterclasses from world-class Baritone Lucas Meachem:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLfWwmZEtqk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfxR25qQFg0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RL5QLZlfkHc>

Need to brush on up music theory? Ricci's website gives you amazing tutorials, exercises, reference charts, and lessons for all beginning and intermediate topics:

<https://www.musictheory.net/>

There are a ton of websites that keep track of what's going on in the world of music, but here is our favorite currently:

<https://operanews.com/>

### Events at a Glance

**March 7, 8, 9** *Annie* at Panther Creek

**March 23** Regional NATS in Towson, MD

**March 29,30** Alexander Masterclass

**March 28-31** *The Mikado* - Savoyards

**April 3** Leah's Senior Recital

**April 13** Caroline's Senior Recital

**April 27** 2pm- Faith Recital

**April 27** 5pm- Jack Recital

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Atlas of the Human Body by Vigué-Martín

## Help Us Help You!

This year we are really trying to teach more students. To do that we need your help! Please follow us on social media at the handles below, and post a positive review on Yelp if you feel so inclined. Tag us anytime! More students would allow us to coordinate more masterclasses, studio classes, recitals, create a summer camp of our own, and many other things that would increase opportunities for you as well!



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<https://www.facebook.com/balancedmusicschool/>




<https://www.yelp.com/biz/balanced-music-studios-chapel-hill>

## Yoga Pose of the Month: Standing Forward Bend

The Standing Sequence

### Utthita Trikonasana

Utthita = Extended Tri = Three Kona = Angle  
"Extended Triangle Posture"



- Inhale** jump or step your feet a quarter turn to your right with arms outstretched. The feet should be positioned one leg-length apart.
- Exhale** as you turn your right foot out. Point it in the same direction as the right hand. Turn the left toes in slightly. Extend the right hand toward the right foot. Clasp the big toe with two fingers (A) or rest the right hand on your shin (B). You may also use a block for support (C). Keep the upper body aligned with the right leg. Rotate the torso while keeping the shoulders broad and the neck long.

**Remain Here for 5 Deep Breaths**

- Inhale** come up slowly. Turn the feet parallel.
- Exhale** lower into the other side as in #2.

**Remain Here for Five Deep Breaths**

- Inhale** come up slowly. Turn the feet parallel.

**Enter the Next Asana from Here**  
Drishti ~ Hand

If the mind wanders bring it back to the sound, quality and texture of your breath. Remain relaxed and present.

Each Asana and Each Breath is a Complete Journey

26 The Standing Sequence

Yoga is one way that helps keep the body balanced, which is critical to be able to play and sing to the best of your ability. When practicing these poses, focus mostly on the breath and the release of tension where it's not needed. Inhale through the nose, lifting the soft palate, and enjoying the openness of the throat. As you exhale, remain open, without clenching, through the chest, throat, soft palate, and belly areas. All poses should be comfortable. Stretching is good, pain is not. If you cannot breathe, you are too far down in the pose. There is no prize for getting to the end! The beauty is in the process.

Picture Credit:

Ashtanga Yoga: The Practice Manual  
By David Swenson

### Water Tracker

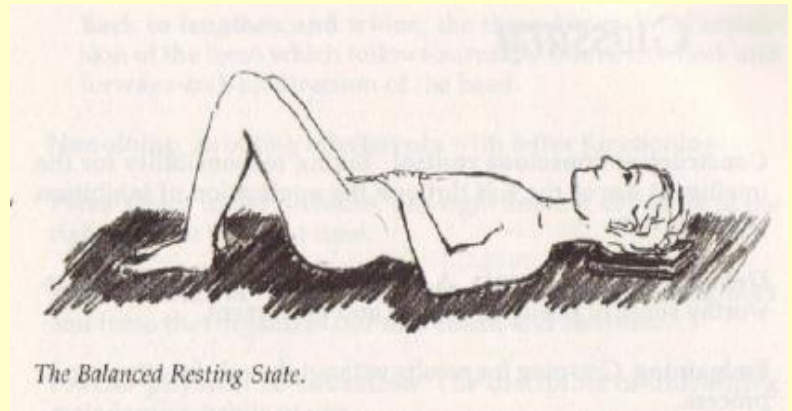
Musicians need tons of water every day to stay hydrated and in top shape for performances. You'll be surprised how good you feel! Aim for half your body weight in ounces per day; don't drinking a ton before lying down due to reflux; shoot for 8 oz. every hour when possible. Make a check mark for every 8 oz. you drink!

February 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

## Daily Exercise: Balanced Resting State\*

This is my absolute favorite exercise of all time. Seriously, I use it as a cure-all for pain, stiffness, general feelings of unwellness, and as an energy boost during the day. For best results, do once a day for 20 minutes, adding in any additional repetitions when in pain, before a performance, or before any activity that may be stress-inducing. Also called 'semi-supine' position, Balanced Resting State (BRS) doesn't require much: just a quiet, warm place, some carpeted floor space, and a few paperback books.

\*This article contains quotes and paraphrases of the book "Body Learning" by Michael Gelb. We have replicated the method and tweaked it for our students. The original article can be found on page 161.



### The Method

1. Begin by placing the books on the floor. (Most people require a small pile of books 2-6" in height. To approximate the right height for you: stand upright with your buttocks and shoulder blades against a wall and measure the distance from the wall to the back of your head, then add ½-1" (...). Stand your body's length away from the books with your feet shoulder-width apart. Let your hands rest gently at your sides. Facing away from the books, look straight ahead with a soft, alert focus. Pause for a few moments.
2. Become aware of the contact of your feet on the floor and notice the distance from your feet to the top of your head. Keep your eyes open and alive, and listen to the sounds around you.
3. Let your thoughts roam around your head and neck to ensure that you are not tightening your neck muscles and pulling your head back. The books should be positioned so that they support your head at the place where your neck ends and your head begins. If your head is not well positioned, then pause, reach back with one hand and support your head while using the other hand to place the books in the proper position. Your feet remain flat on the floor, with your knees pointing up to the ceiling and your hands resting on the floor or loosely folded on your chest. Allow the weight of your body to be fully supported by the floor.
4. Avoid fidgeting or wriggling around to 'get comfortable'. If you are uncomfortable then start over. All you need to reap the benefit of this procedure is to rest in this position. As you rest, gravity will be lengthening your spine while 'undoing' unnecessary twists and tensions. Keep your eyes open to avoid dozing off. You may wish to bring your attention to the flow of your breathing (without trying to change it) and to the gentle rhythms of your body.
5. Be aware of the ground supporting your back, allowing your shoulders to rest as your back widens. Let your neck be free as your whole body lengthens and expands.
6. After you have rested for 20 minutes, get up slowly, being careful to avoid stiffening or shortening your body as you return to a standing position. In order to achieve a smooth transition, decide when and how you are going to move. To get up, extend one arm up over your head, and extend the same leg down to lie flat on the floor. Turn your head to the side of the flat limbs, then using the opposite arm and leg, push down into the floor to roll over onto your stomach, being careful not to pull the head up or tighten the neck as you do so. Ease your way into a crawling position (or cat/cow) and then on to one knee. With your head leading the movement upward, stand.
7. Pause for a few moments, listen, eyes alive. Again, feel your feet on the floor, and notice the distance between your feet at the top of your head. You may be surprised to discover that the distance has expanded. As you move into the activities of your day, think about 'not doing' anything that interferes with this expansion, ease and overall buoyancy.