

Bringing Songs To Life!

Land O' Lakes District – Leadership Academy

Jay Althof

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River Falls, WI

Agenda

- Welcome & Introduction
- Key Elements Of Songs
- Live Demonstrations
- Wrap-Up

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Welcome

- Purpose
 - Develop the skills and techniques to bring songs to life for our audiences (and ourselves)
- Process
 - Discuss key elements of songs and how they can be used to create a shared emotion between the performers and the audience
 - Create those moments – live!
- Payoff
 - Even more fun singing and performing!

Introductions

- Who is Jay? (Why should I listen to him?)
 - Barbershopper my whole life – a member of the society for 39 years – currently dual member with LaCrosse and St. Croix Valley chapters.
 - 3 District Quartet Championships - currently a member of Vocality.
 - Top 20 International several times
 - Worked with over 25 coaches – always looking for “best practices”!

Key Elements of Songs

- Words
- Notes
- Rhythm
- Tempo
- Articulation
- Dynamics
- Body language (face, posture, movement)

These are the “technical” aspects – but what about the Emotion?

The Story

- What is the overall story of the song?
- Ballads could be like a movie script
- Up-tunes need to have a motivation
- The “technical” aspects are used to tell the story and bring out the emotion
- The chorus or quartet **MUST** agree on the overall story and key sub-plots – if not the exact same “script”

“To play a wrong note is insignificant; to play without passion is inexcusable.” — Ludwig van Beethoven.

Live Demonstrations – Let's Sing!

- Heart of my Heart
 - Young people in love
 - Sub-text?
 - Singing to wife on 40th anniversary
 - Sub-text?
 - Finding a picture of your 40th anniversary – 3 years after your wife has passed on
 - Sub-text?

*Heart of my heart, I love you
Life would be naught without you
Light of my life, my darling
I love you, I love you
I can forget you never
From you I ne'er can sever
Say you'll be mine forever
I love you (only you)*

Live Demonstrations – Hello Mary Lou

- What are our stories?

- How do we feel?
- How old are we?
- Who is Mary Lou?
- Other thoughts?

You passed me by one sunny day
Flashed those big brown eyes my way
And ooh I wanted you forever more
Now I'm not one that gets around
I swear my feet stuck to the ground
And though I never did meet you before
I said "hello Mary Lou
Goodbye heart
Sweet Mary Lou
I'm so in love with you
I knew Mary Lou
We'd never part
So hello Mary Lou
Goodbye heart"
I saw your lips I heard your voice
Believe me I just had no choice
Wild horses couldn't make me stay away
I thought about a moonlit night
Arms around you, good an' tight
All I had to see for me to say

Chorus

Tag

Wrap-up

- Creating an emotional connection with our audiences through our performances is a great feeling – and keeps our audiences coming back for more!
- To achieve that connection we need:
 - To have a compelling story to tell
 - Make sure everyone in our group agrees with that story
 - Have good technique in order to bring that story to life
- Thoughts – Reactions?

Wrap-up

How did we do?

- Class Evaluation – please fill out the form and leave it as you exit
- Contact Info
 - Jay Althof: JayAlthof@gmail.com, 651-206-2686, White Bear Lake, MN

Thank you!