

CONFERENCE SCHEDULES

1/12/24 FRIDAY

- 4:00PM** **Registration Opens**
6:00PM **Welcome and Teacher Awards**
7:00PM **Teacher Time Recital and Fundraiser**
(tickets \$15)

1/13/24 SATURDAY

9:00AM - 6:00PM **CWR NATS Auditions Semi-Finals**

9:00AM **Mandatory Auditions Judges Meeting**

10:00AM **What happened last week...? Suggested organizational methods around applied lessons**
Presented by Seth Keeton

Professor Lynn Holding's work in motor learning theory has begun to revolutionize many aspects of voice teaching. Her practical suggestions I received during the NATS Intern Program centered around student-focused preparation have improved my teaching by leaps and bounds. They have made actionable many of the principles and suggestions from my 2016 NATS article "Effective and meaningful grading in applied collegiate voice." Tracking students' weekly progress in preparation for the lesson at hand has become an integral part of my students' improvement. I have created a system for this purpose with the use of Canvas, the Learning Management System that our University uses, and Obsidian, a customizable note-taking app for Apple and Windows.

In a presentation rich with examples, I will demonstrate methods around student assessment, reflective journaling, and effective note taking using Canvas and Obsidian. I will describe an organized methodical system that is easy to put into action.

11:00AM **The Beginning Singing Actor's Recipe Book**
Presented By: Mary Jane McCloskey

Mary Jane will work with our younger singers to help them connect words, emotions and expressions to tell the story of their songs. MT, Classical, and CM songs are acceptable!

****Youth and High School Students Encouraged to Attend!****

12:00PM **True North: A Case for Canadian Art Song**
Presented by: Joel Balzun

Considering NATS' recent addition of the Roberta Stephen Scholarship for outstanding performance of a Canadian art song, this presentation will equip teachers with an introductory knowledge of Canadian art song repertoire and key characteristics of Canadian art music. Topics will include the representation of identity, landscape and culture/cultural mosaic in Canadian song as well as resources for identifying effective song selections for students of varying ability levels. Key figures in Canadian art song composition and performance will be presented.

It is my hope that at the conclusion of this presentation, NATS teachers and students will be excited by the variety and artistry to be discovered in Canadian art song literature. I aspire to see Canadian art song be woven into the canon of American voice studios, just as American art song has been welcomed and integrated into the voice studios of Canada.

1:00 PM Classical Voice Clinic with *Thomas Glenn*

**2:30 PM Unlocking Global Potential: Utilizing a health driven pedagogy for the complexity of American pop music
*Presented by: Kelly Burge***

"Embracing Vocal Pedagogy in American Pop Music: Complexity, Health, and Unity" American pop music has become a universal language, uniting people worldwide. Vocal educators can now embrace this phenomenon through a health-driven pedagogy. Singers in pop music face underestimated complexity, requiring them to be vocal triathletes, navigating challenges between verses, choruses, and bridges.

Contrary to popular belief, classical voice training isn't an ideal foundation for pop singers. . Applying classical techniques to pop music risks vocal trauma.

At the urging of the late, Shaun Royer, known as the "Career Maker" for pop singers, I created the pop color wheel as a Pop Vocal Pedagogy. Drawing from Grammy-nominated engineers and vocal experts. This approach empowers pop vocalists to expand complexity while maintaining vocal health. This platform helps singers develop their unique style, appear on shows like American Idol, gain followers, and create a healthy signature sound.

3:30 PM Commercial Music Voice Clinic with *Emily Castleton*

4:30 PM SNATS SUMMIT with *Nick Perna*

5:30 PM BREAK FOR DINNER

**7:30 PM Guest Artist Recital with *The University of Utah Graduate Quartet*
(additional tickets \$15)**

8:30 PM Volunteer Raffle Prize Drawing (following the recital)

1/14/24 SUNDAY

**9:00 AM Poor Pitch Singers in the voice studio - Current challenges and solutions
*Presented by: Erica Waxer***

Teaching pitch to voice students can be a challenge for teachers. Although less than 5% of the population is calculated to be tone deaf, poor pitch singers (PPS) are singers without amusia who still have trouble with matching pitch, intonation and tonal memory. The presenter has surveyed and interviewed teachers to analyze perceptions and experiences teaching poor pitch singers and to identify best tools and practices as well as gaps in current pedagogical literature and training.

**10:00AM Using Theatrical Intimacy Practices to Create Vocal Health Boundaries
*Presented by: David Eggers and Brian Manternach***

Musical theatre rehearsals can sometimes be vocally risky environments. Stage directors, music directors, and other rehearsal leaders sometimes unknowingly ask singers to produce vocal sounds that may not be sustainable or easily accomplished in healthy ways. In this power dynamic, singers may feel as though they have to go forward with these directions, even when they have concerns. How can they navigate these situations in a way that honors the requests of the directors without potentially compromising their vocal health?

In this presentation, we will use the practices and language of theatrical intimacy training to help singers establish vocal boundaries. Working from a consent-based approach, we will outline steps they can take in various rehearsal and performance settings to advocate for themselves and prioritize their vocal health while still demonstrating a commitment to the vision of the directors.

11:00AM Martin Luther King Jr. Keynote: Monica Williams McCullough

12:00PM Musical Theater Voice Clinic with Brian Manternach and David Eggers

1:30PM - 5:00PM CWR NATS Auditions Finals

5:30PM Awards Ceremony

ONLINE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

- Available on our website.
- On January 12, an email went out to all who have registered with detailed instructions on how to log in.

Vocal Agility: Six Pedagogues' Recommendations for the Practice of an Essential Skill

Presenter: Valentine Baron

The practice of vocal agility in the modern voice studio has been neglected. Why is this important aspect of our vocal technique forgotten? There are two reasons: the first is the idea that vocal agility is a natural talent and not a skill that you can develop, the second is the lack of explanation and research about agility in the current vocal pedagogy literature. This presentation aims to reconnect singers and voice teachers with the practice of vocal agility. To do so, the presenter conducted a literature review on techniques to develop vocal agility of six pedagogues of the nineteenth and twenty-first century. Three of these chosen pedagogues have been interviewed to offer their insights and a deeper explanation about their methods.

Sound Advice: A Vocal Acoustics Primer and “How-To” for Using Spectrograms in the Voice Studio

Presented by: Brian Manternach and Lynn Maxfield

Much has been written in recent decades about voice acoustics. As tools for observation and analysis have become more accessible, there is greater desire than ever to understand how singing can be explained through the language of frequency, harmonics, and formants. As with all new technology, however, a necessary discussion is why any of this matters for studio voice teachers. If generations of singers and teachers have found success without detailed understandings of voice acoustics and spectrograms, why should we pursue it now?

This presentation seeks to answer that question. We will offer a primer on the fundamentals of voice acoustics, focusing on the most practical elements for studio voice teachers. We will then offer tutorials and demonstrations of how to use and interpret spectrograms—from VoceVista Video Pro to free, downloadable spectrogram apps—in ways that are applicable to both classical and CCM singing.

Dying With Honor: Representations of Suicide Among the Titular Heroines of Giacomo Puccini

Presented by: Kaitlyn Sabrowsky

This session explores three titular suicidal heroines in Giacomo Puccini's operas: Tosca, Suor Angelica, and Cio-Cio-San. Are these truly tragic sopranos? A holistic and detailed survey of each heroine reveals that their suicides exhibit autonomy and strength, transforming them into women who are no longer passive—the acted upon become the actor. This multidisciplinary research is presented through a performance-centered lens, combining the specific disciplines of suicidology, feminism,

opera criticism and the soprano voice. A detailed look at the words of the libretti and letters from Puccini himself provide insight into his desire to infuse these characters with strength and intelligence. Video clips of celebrated sopranos bring the intentions revealed through the libretto and musical material to life in a more tangible way for the audience. "Dying with Honor" is intended for those who advise students, program, and/or perform this physically, vocally, and emotionally demanding repertoire.

Demystifying and utilizing nasal resonance

Presented By: Melissa Treinkman

Recent research by Sundberg and others has revealed that lowering the soft palate and allowing for some nasal resonance can provide great benefits to voice users, including better mitigation of voice breaks than straw phonation (Voice Foundation, 2022). Most people associate the word "nasality" with a very bright, twangy sound. In actuality, the sound that most people associate with the word "nasal" has nothing to do with the nose or the soft palate being lowered (Perna, 2020). It is important for voice professionals to distinguish between and be able to separate these two different voice qualities (nasal and bright), even if they are ultimately combined. Because lowering the soft palate lowers all formant frequencies (McCoy, 2019) it can be a highly useful tool to dampen and take the pressure off intense vocalization, such as belting. This presentation will delve into the what, when, how and why of using nasal resonance.

Thirteen Chinese Art Songs by Zi Huang: A Bridge Between East and West

Presented by: Yue Yin

This presentation seeks to introduce thirteen art songs by Zi Huang, offering a multifaceted exploration that encompasses historical-bibliographical context, theoretical analysis, and practical performance insights. The aim is to inspire and facilitate the engagement of more vocalists in the study and rendition of these compositions.

Zi Huang's musical journey, steeped in the study of Western classical music, significantly influenced his compositional style. Drawing from his childhood exposure to ancient Chinese literature and years of education in Chinese ethnic music theory prior to studying abroad, he forged a distinct genre: Chinese art songs.

In his short but eventful 34-year life, Zi Huang witnessed the turmoil and upheaval of 1930s China, which served as a catalyst for his collaboration with like-minded authors in crafting these thirteen art songs. Through his music, he conveyed a vision for a more peaceful future, reflecting a deep yearning for tranquility.

Additionally, this collection includes four Ancient Chinese literary Art Songs: "Going to Jiangliang"("下江陵"), "A Flower in the Haze"("花非花"), "Crimson Lips"("点绛唇赋登楼"), and "Song of Divination"("卜算子 黄州定慧院寓居作"). These compositions reveal Zi Huang's profound affinity for ancient poetry. Skillfully fusing Western classical harmony with the Chinese pentatonic scale, he vividly conveys the artistic essence of Tang and Song poetry. In contrast to the gravity of other themes within the thirteen art songs, these four Ancient Chinese literary Art Songs offer a fresh and distinct perspective.

Furthermore, this project provides valuable reference materials through text and music theory analysis, complemented by language-specific pronunciation guidance. These resources not only serve as a compass for performers but also deepen the understanding of the songs, offering expanded horizons for future performances and research endeavors.

SNATS (Student NATS) POSTER PAPER

The Effect of Study Music Tempo on Short Term Memory Retention in Reading and Verbal Comprehension

Presented by: Payton Ballinger

This study experimentally investigated the effect of background music on retention as it relates to short term memory. Eighty undergraduate participants from various fields of study at Pepperdine University were randomly assigned to either listen to or read a preselected passage while listening to preselected excerpts of fast or slow tempo music. All participants were then asked to complete a 10 question test covering the material presented. There was a main effect specifically for music tempo in that participants who were exposed to background music at a slower speed while either reading or listening to a passage scored higher on the comprehension task. Consequently, the type of the retention task was less significant than the speed and tempo of the background music played. The results align with the original hypothesis and confirm that there is a correlation between music and memory retention. This study demonstrates how the presence and type of background music can potentially aid or hinder retention.

What's In A Voice Lesson Anyway?

Presented by: Michaela Kelly

What is in a voice lesson anyway? My vocology study examines the relationship between teacher effectiveness and instructional behaviors within the motor learning classification framework in a voice lesson. The framework outlines five instructional behaviors: motivation, modeling, verbal instruction, feedback and student physical attempts. While all are important, the last of these - student physical attempts - are crucial because singing is a motor skill which lives in the realm of procedural learning. If a majority of the lesson is filled with modeling, verbal instruction, and feedback, the student has only been exposed to the target motor skill and has not learned it themselves. Observational data was transcribed from lesson recordings of ten teacher/student pairs. The transcription was then categorized into the five pre-practice instructional behaviors.. Each teacher participant completed a self-effectiveness scale. An ANOVA comparison of means will be conducted in the fall of 2023 and results are forthcoming.