

Term 2 2007

VOICE BOX

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Concerts are the perfect opportunity to dig deep, focus, do your best & pretend everything is fine when scared to death!

TERM 2 CONCERT - FOR FUN & FAREWELL

Entitled 'THE BEST SINGING CONCERT EVER' - 6pm Thursday 17 May, in M1 Music Block - Bring a plate of food!

The singing concert is a great chance to celebrate the work we have done together. One of the greatest gifts we have as human beings is our ability to give and share music with one another. Singing is an invigorating and uplifting experience for both the performer and the audience. A performance is a moment shared between everyone in the room. And although we all get scared and nervous, these feelings quickly transform to excitement after the event.

Performing is the best gift you can give - give completely, be vulnerable and hold nothing back. As an audience member, the best gift you can give in return is to listen with an open heart and receive with all your senses.

So...what to sing?! Some students have an ABRSM or Trinity vocal exam coming up soon. This is a good time to try out your songs in a public arena and see how you do.

Some of you have only just started and are still not comfortable with the idea of performing a solo. If this is you - fret not - you can

sing in a group or do a duet. We shall discuss it next week.

Many of you will be just dying to do a solo and can't decide what! Have a think about whether you feel you would do a better job performing a piece that you have learnt new from scratch for the occasion, or whether it might be better to take an older, more familiar song to a new level.

Duets are always welcome - it keeps the variety and they are often very enjoyable for all concerned. You are welcome to do this with someone I already teach, or with someone I don't teach at all! I don't mind and your chosen partner may come to one or two of your lessons.


I have already had a good think about suitable songs for each of you and I will help you make a good choice that you feel comfortable with and that you will perform well. If you have something in mind, do let me know and if there is anything at all you are worried about, we can talk it through.



Emily Wall
My sister,
one of the
best free-
style
kayakers
in Great
Britain

Imagine doing something like that!...

...and you're not far off what performing feels like. It's a true leap of faith. Faith in your audience, faith in your pianist and faith in yourself!

| PRACTICALITIES | ARRIVE EARLY | BRING A PLATE | WHAT TO WEAR?? | WHO'S PLAYING?? |
|--|--|---|---|---|
|  | Warm-up We will probably do a group warm-up around 5.30. If you can't make it, make sure you find quiet time to do your exercises before arriving. | Sweet or Savory? Junior school bring something sweet. Middle and Senior do savory. Just a guideline - all offerings gratefully gobbled! | Classical piece Go smart Musical Theatre Go costume or an outfit to reflect the character Pop Music Go Idol & glamorous casual. | Accompanist Dr Greg Neil There will be a small charge per performance for this service. \$10 at the most added to your invoices. |

How to perform & communicate?

Start at the beginning with song preparation: who are you, what are you saying and why? The more you know, the more convincing you will be. Sometimes this is obvious. For example: you are singing 'Part of Your World' and you are Ariel, the mermaid heroine in Disney's film classic. You sing your song whilst **moving** about your secret treasure cave full of forbidden human objects which you can **see** and **touch**. What you **feel** in this situation is a crucial aspect of performance. Most importantly Ariel does not feel the same way all the way through the song. She takes an **emotional journey**. You need to construct a journey and a scenario for every song you sing.

So you think the words don't tell you how old you are or where you are from? This is where it gets interesting because you can be creative and make it up! Go as far and be as extreme as you can, but keep it believable, real and genuine. Write your emotional journey onto your music and take that journey every time you sing the song.

**Don't Act It
... Be It!**

To move or not to move? Generally the more dramatic the piece, the more opportunity there may be to move. Be guided by the emotion. In life we move because we **want** something - so you need to want something in your performance. Again, write the **desire** you have onto the music and write down the **resultant action**, whatever you have decided it should be. I can help!

Decide what to wear in advance. Practice in it at least twice and show it to a few people, that way you can be sure that on the day you will feel completely comfortable. What you wear should enhance your empathy with the character and the music.

Now - **IMMERSE** yourself in the world you have created. Share your thoughts and feelings with us. Thoroughly indulge yourself and your audience. Be that character! Tell us your story and that is how you perform and communicate!

Memorising Tips

Memorising can seem tricky - but in all truth, if you don't know the words then you don't know it well enough! And quite frankly there's no excuse for that! Think of your favourite pop song: the words just went in all by themselves because you know it and you **love** it. So you have to know and love the song you will perform.

Try the following:

- Write out the words
- Draw pictures to build a context
- Make a cue card
- Break it down into lines and verses
- Do the memorising early on
- Create an imaginative story
- Repetition

What to do if you DO forget the words?!

Of course, brain freeze happens to everyone at some point. but how you deal with it is the most important thing. If the words fail you, don't panic and try not to give the game away. Just make it up! Your audience will start to shift uncomfortably in their seats if you look pained. So please keep them happy! The only person that knows the real words is you, stay calm, in control and in character.

Some Tips:

- Sing the same verse twice
- Rhubarb until the right words come back to you

Rarely will you forget an entire section, just a word or two or maybe a line and with good preparation you should know your weak spots!

Music & Diction

These are the fundamental basis from which to start. The composer was duly inspired by the text enough to create a beautiful vocal line. Please make sure the vocal line is 100% accurate. The words should fit perfectly to the notes and rhythm on the page. (The only exception to this is pop music and jazz where an improvised quality is an inherent part of the musical style) Speak the words and find the poetry for yourself.

Diction is often a tricky area. If you sing with the normal level of articulation you use in conversation, no one will hear a single word. You must be over the top with your text and even when you're spitting buckets and feel ridiculous you will still have someone shouting "what was that, love?!...I couldn't hear the words!"

The words and music are the most powerful aspect of your communication. Listen to the piano and the harmony, it is very often showing the mood and the emotion. Let the way the music affects you be seen on your face. Respond to it and mirror it in your singing.

The audience want to hear the words!

Be expressive with what the composer and the poet have given you - you owe it to them. They have written you a beautiful song, the least you can do in return is give it the best performance you can.

PROCEDURES

When to exit the audience

Go out during the final applause for the performer 2 before you.

While you are waiting

Be very quiet and get in character.

I will introduce you & you walk on purposefully!

Be guided by the mood of the song - don't smile if you have to sing something sad! No bow.

Where to stand

By the dip of the piano - make sure your posture is straight and strong.

Ready to start??

Focus inward while you take some deep breaths to steady yourself. When you **are** ready and in the right mood, raise your head focussing your eyes to the back of the room above the audience.

Now you really are ready...

Don't break your focus. Dr Neil will know you are ready and he will start. You don't need to look at him.

At the end

Bow to tumultuous applause and leave the stage quickly!

Audience!

When you are not performing, you are the audience. Be prepared to stay and support your fellow singers.

Parents, please arrive on time to support your daughters and stay until the end of the show.

YAWNERS, FIDGETERS AND MUNCHERS ARE BANNED!!

Recent News

There isn't much because it's only the start of the year, but there are an awful lot of people enrolled for both ABRSM and Trinity vocal exams. So I know you will all join me in sending lots of goodwill to the following people, especially since their exams are due to happen after I've left!

Alexandra McDonald-Bull Grade 5
Eleanor Woodhouse Grade 5
Genevieve Corbett Grade 3
Hannah Gapes Grade 3
Amy Mills Grade 3
Alexandria Norgate Grade 3
Lucy Spratt Grade 3
Emma Campbell Grade 2
Isobel Grant Grade 2
Charissa Ong Grade 2
Eloise Wright Grade 2
Molly Leishman Grade 1
Daniela Sowter Grade 1

On a personal note, I'm in the middle of packing mayhem but I'm feeling very positive about everything. However, it might be advisable to send cheques to my new address:

**924 Beach Rd,
Torbay, North Shore.**

From the beginning of May my landline number will be **473 1336** (although, I'll be living in a dip, so I still won't have mobile reception!).

I've also attached my rabbit flyer as the poor poppets need a new home (Lizzy, NO!).

I certainly hope to return to NZ, it has become my spiritual home and I have loved working with all of you!

Thank you for your kind messages of goodwill and for your sympathy and understanding (it's all been a bit traumatic!). You will be greatly missed, and I hope you will all continue with your singing!

Upcoming Events

Opera Factory classes start Monday

April 30th contact them now to register your interest.

Theatre/Studios at 7 Eden Street Newmarket.

Phone (09) 921 7801 Email:

admin@operafactory.com

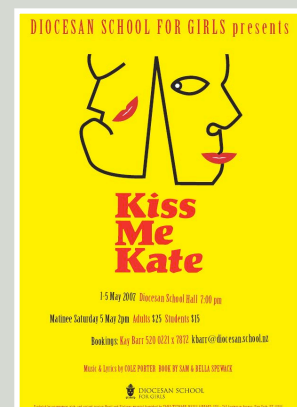
COURSE DIRECTOR-LINDA KITCHEN and specialised professional tutors. Solo and/or ensemble coaching in performance, stagecraft, movement, presentation, drama.

- Mondays: 6 - 8pm Class 1: A new 'after work' class - singers of all ages and levels.
- Tuesdays: 10.30 - 11.30am Class 2: A morning class for pre-school and infants (with Mums).
- Tuesdays: 4 - 6pm Class 3: A new class for secondary school students

Renowned New Zealand soprano Patricia Wright presents *An Evening of Lieder* at the Auckland Town Hall Concert Chamber on Monday 7 May at 6.30. Highly recommended for those doing the Aria contest!

NBR New Zealand Opera productions of Lucia di Lammermoor and Turandot. \$10 tickets for the matinees (17 July Lucia, 25 Sept Turandot) are available from **The Edge** as a special school promotion. If you're interested badger **David Gordon!** Otherwise, my lovely friend **Sarah Wood** (you hardly have to remember a different name!) has said she's happy to offer you her chorus discount of 10% on B and C reserve tickets. Contact Julie Bird at the NZ Opera ticket desk directly (379 4020)

There's also a show on in May almost exclusively for **Eleanor Woodhouse** called *Hits of the Blitz* featuring favourite songs from the war years! Hit www.iticket.co.nz for more info!!



Don't forget the all important KISS ME KATE!! The Dio show for 2007 - be there or be ■ !!

Good luck to all involved :-)