



*National Association
of Teachers of Singing
San Francisco
Bay Area Chapter
Newsletter*

December, 2007

**Letter From the Editor
A Call for Content**

My fellow teachers, scholars and singers,

In this, my fifth edition of the newsletter, I would like to extend my call for articles again. I am sure that many of you have projects, philosophies, pedagogical wisdom, repertoire suggestions and the like that you have always wanted to share with your colleagues. So, let's do it!

Perhaps you have been teaching for 40 or 50 years now and feel you have a profound understanding of the voice, what works and what doesn't. I think the membership would like to hear from you! Perhaps you are at the other end of the spectrum, just beginning your career as a teacher of singing, and you have questions about appropriate repertoire for different age groups and voice types, or a technical question about the voice. I think the membership would like to hear from you and help you on your way!

If you have papers, theses, thoughts or concepts that you feel are worth sharing, and that you can put into words, I would like to hear from you. There are no limits on topic or length of submissions! I will be happy to read and work with you to pare back large scale items to fit the newsletter.

I am so excited to include in this issue, a recent study and survey of East Coast Musical Theater programs submitted by Lucy Beck! This article will be of particular use to those of you with high-school juniors and seniors considering advanced study in the field. Thank you, Lucy!

Sincerely,
Joshua Ian Elder

NATS Newsletter

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter
18234 Crest Avenue
Castro Valley, CA 94546

Vocal Studio of Victoria Rapanan goes *INTERNATIONAL!!!*

I will be teaching 2 Master Classes and private lessons in Manila, Philippines over the Christmas vacation. So far, I have 35 students and the list keeps growing everyday. These are semi-professional to professional singers consisting of conservatory graduate students, voice teachers, musical society members, and even 2 choral directors flying in from Bangkok!! They are as thrilled as I am to have this wonderful opportunity. This has been a dream of mine for years.

Victoria Rapanan

Feedback from the "Inside Admissions Workshop"

The following comment came from Katya Roemer regarding a student who participated in the Fall Symposium:

"One thing I think she most certainly got but may not comment on, is that she is every bit as capable as any of the other singers she heard. This is an important lesson. Teens so frequently compare themselves to others and conclude that everyone is so much better than they are. It's simply not true, and it's good for students to see that the "playing" field is relatively the same for those in their age group and that each singer has their strengths and weaknesses in differing areas. It was good for her to hear and see that there really is a general level of competency at this age and that she is as capable of competing for admittance to music school as most who will be applying."

2007-2008 Officers

President: Sharon Kaye	sharonmezzo@comcast.net
Vice President of Programs: Sue Field	mezzo54@comcast.net
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Newsletter Editor: Joshua Ian Elder	joshuaianelder@hotmail.com
Webmaster: Meghan Dibble	finalalice@hotmail.com
Hospitality Chair: April McNeely	april_mcneely@yahoo.com

She presented this last summer at the National Workshop in Rhode Island where it was enthusiastically received. For more information: <http://www.stonesinwater.com/anatomy.cfm> or www.babettelightner.com.

Lyric Images: Tina Baird, together with people from other professions, is preparing a DVD entitled "Air is a Gift". This will include 3 dimensional animation of the physiology and physics of breathing as applied to the special demands of singing. The National NATS will pay Lyric Images \$600, and the SFBAC will pay \$4500 to help defray the costs of producing the DVD. Tina and her colleagues from Lyric Images will donate the DVD to SFBACNATS. The DVD will be available for sale at the April 6th workshop, proceeds to the SFBAC, with a \$4 per copy royalty to Lyric Images.

Recitals: Victoria Rapanan

The recital at Rossmoor last week was a great success, but due to problems with running over time limits, in future, each recital coordinator will ask applicants to submit 2 songs, (including exact timing) plus one additional to be used in case there is time. It will be at the discretion of the recital coordinator to put together the final program, depending on the number of singers and the material submitted.

Accompanists: It was decided that a flat fee of \$200 will be offered to accompanists of student recitals. This will include brief spot-checks of the music before the recital, NOT run-throughs. Any student wanting a complete run-through should contact the accompanist before the recital and arrange a rehearsal and a fee with them.

Website: Meghan Dibble

Progress is being made toward being able to pay local chapter membership dues on-line, hopefully by January 1 2008. There will be a form to be filled out on-line, including the number of your National NATS membership (which is a pre-requisite to local membership).

Meghan will contact National to find out whether it will be possible in the future to do both National and Local dues simultaneously on-line.

Meghan is also investigating the possibility of having on-line voting for elections.

Amendment to bylaws: Dorothy Barnhouse

The amendments deal primarily with re-defining the responsibilities of officers, due to the shift to electronic communications. A final draft of proposed updates will go to the Board within the next week. The Board will respond about content only. Dorothy will then send it to the Director of a Graduate Writing program at U.Mass, Boston (her daughter! ;)) to check for consistency and adherence to normal style manual rules. It will then be sent to the entire membership for ratification.

Miscellaneous:

At present Lucy Beck has the stock of the Oren Brown video, and is responsible for mailing it to those who have ordered and paid for it. Soon the chapter will own the DVD of Tina Baird's "Breathing is a Gift". The stock of both of these will be transferred to Sue Field who in the future will be in charge of mailing them to purchasers and submitting royalty payment requests to the Treasurer. Very soon it will be possible to order and pay for these on the web.

Submitted by DB, edited by SK, DRR and SF.

Dorothy G Barnhouse

Minutes of November 4 SFBACNATS Board Meeting

2:30 pm, November 4, 2007

Home of Meghan Dibble, San Francisco

Present: Meghan Dibble, April McNeely, Victoria Rapanan, Sue

Field, Dorothy Barnhouse, Diana Rae Ryan, Sharon Kaye

Absent: Josh Elder, Audrey Howitt, Ruthanne Crow



Membership Report: Diana Rae Ryan

Next year the Membership Directory will be available on the website.

There have been complaints about too many emails and ones with graphics which take forever to download unless one has high speed internet. Information about events should be sent in **plain text** in the body of the message to the Membership Secretary. Any attached flyers, brochures, etc will not be sent out. Instead they will be sent to the Webmaster for the website.

The Code of Ethics in the current directory has been supplanted by the new Code of Ethics developed by the national office. The Webmaster will obtain this and make it available on the SFBAC website.

Treasurer's Report: Audrey Howitt (absent)

No updated report is available, but we continue to operate in the black.

Singing Festival: Ruthanne Crow (report submitted in writing)

The Singing Festival will happen March 15th, from 7 am to 10 pm, at CSU East Bay (Hayward)

The Winners Circle recital will take place the same evening. All logistics are being worked out. Invitations and announcements will be sent out soon.

Some questions about categories were raised. The current categories are Art Song, Aria, Musical Theater and Avocational. There was discussion that these categories could be broadly interpreted.

Newsletter: Joshua Elder (submitted in writing)

Joshua asks members to submit material, for instance, thoughts on an experience in your studio with a vocal pedagogy problem, information about how you are using technology in your studio... anything else you want to share with the other members.

Programs: Sue Field

The Fall Workshop, *Inside Admissions*, was successful and well attended. The new student price of \$10 for attendance will be continued. Teachers are urged to inform their students of workshops from which they might benefit.

Sue Field will ask all teachers who had students who participated or attended to write a short description of what they learned from the workshop. This will appear in a future newsletter.

The Spring Workshop will be April 6 from 2-5, Place TBA. Tina Baird is preparing an animated DVD expanding her research on the physiology and physics of breathing for singing. (See below, *Lyric Images*). She will present this for the first part of the workshop. The second part will be an Open Studio with teachers from our local chapter working with beginners or intermediates with vocal problems.

The Fall Workshop for 2008 will be Anatomy of Wholeness, presented by Babette Lightner. *"What you need to know about your structure and function to sing and teach others to sing with dynamic power, expressive ease and optimal vocal health."*

Opera Scenes at San Jose State University Saturday, December 8th 7:30PM

Ranging from Mozart to Menotti, nine scenes will constitute the program the San Jose State Opera Workshop is presenting in the Concert Hall of the School of Music and Dance at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 8th. Talented young singer/actors will demonstrate what they have learned in 14 weeks as exemplified by excerpts from *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *La fille du regiment*, *The Bartered Bride*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Arabella* and *The Medium*. Director Daniel Helfgot and Music Director Michel Singher have been responsible for their operatic training.

Tickets are available at the door, \$15 general admission, \$10 with student ID.

For more information call (408) 924-4674.

Exciting News from Raymond Salazar

Melissa Chaty, voice student of SFBAC member Raymond Salazar, has won the California State Title and will be representing California in the upcoming Miss America Scholarship Pageant which will be aired live from Planet Hollywood, Las Vegas on the TLC network on January 26, 2008. Melissa has been an advocate for Alzheimer's Awareness and will be singing The Jewel Song from "Faust" for the talent portion of the competition. Melissa's complete contestant profile can be viewed at www.missamerica.org.



Materials for Newsletter Publication
should be sent **electronically** to:
joshuaianelder@hotmail.com
Deadline: December 20

MISSION CITY OPERA ORCHESTRA

PRESENTS ITS

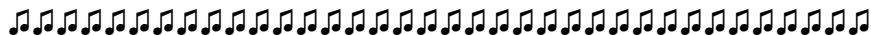
6TH ANNUAL HANDEL'S MESSIAH SING ALONG CONCERT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9TH, 7:30 PM
SANTA CLARA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1700 LINCOLN STREET, SANTA CLARA

Come enjoy Michael Taylor conducting the Mission City Opera Orchestra with soloists:
Diane Squires – Soprano (SFBAC member)
Sharon Kaye – Alto (SFBAC president)
Norman DeVol - Tenor
Martin Bell – Baritone

This is a benefit for Second Harvest Food Banks and all profits are forwarded. Tickets are available at the door \$20 + (1) non-perishable food item per person.

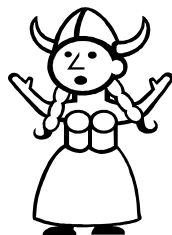
Support our members and this worthy cause!
For information, call 408.749.7607



STUDENT RECITAL UPDATE

NATS Student Recitals continues its unprecedented growth! The Late Bloomers Voice Party had 13 singers. The Rossmoor recital was full, with 8 singers and a total of 85 people in the audience. Also, thanks to one of my students, we now have a fill-in-the-blank Recital Application available on our SFBAC website for the singers to complete online. Thank you to all for your support, and let us continue the excitement that these Student Recitals have generated!

Victoria Rapanan



Because newsletters should be
funny...

Christmas Carols For The Psychiatrically Challenged

DEMENTIA - I Think I'll Be Home For Christmas.

NARCISSISTIC - Hark The Herald Angels Sing (About Me)

MULTIPLE PERSONALITY - We Three Queens Disoriented Are.

SCHIZOPHRENIA - Do You Hear What I Hear?

PARANOIA - Santa Claus is Coming To Get Me.

Thanks to Sally Bahner

plastic sleeves. Don't bring the most difficult music to play, because occasionally they are not always able to get their best pianists.

Do you ever ask a student to sing another song, or sing a song another way? Yes, they may ask for a different tempo or style. They want to see if a student is hiding behind a very learned interpretation.

How important is the voice? Very important. They expect most of their applicants to have studied for years, unlike acting or dance.

Does it matter what vocal style a student chooses? Yes, sing legit.

How many people are on the panel? Neil, another faculty member, the accompanist, and often a student sits in.

Can an accepted student schedule a lesson with a teacher before choosing the school? Yes, just give enough time to arrange it.

How many voice faculty do you have? 15 classically trained teachers, who all have an intense interest in the variety of musical theatre sound.

Besides the above, how do you choose a student? Out of 600 applicants, 200 are quality students. We normally accept 48, but will accept less this year. We want to return to a more intimate program to maintain the relaxed and friendly atmosphere we established here.

We look for students who are very trainable. There's an instinctive element in selecting the final students we want. They must be musically healthy.

Final thoughts: Neil considers the school a repertory company, where all the students are treated as individuals. They look for and train the best possible performers they can be.

The NATS Winter Workshop

Partnering with the National Opera Association

From Studio to Stage:

Integrating Dramatic Tools
Into Singer Training

January 4 - January 6, 2008

Millennium Biltmore Hotel
506 South Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, CA



NATS/NOA Member Early Full Registration \$255
Non-NATS/NOA Member Early Full Registration \$285

plastic sheets. Others, like Syracuse, do not want music in plastic sleeves. Make sure all the notes are copied and that the songs are in the right key.

What do all the schools want the student to know about them?

Most of the schools said that they are like repertory companies in that they select who they need and who is a good fit for their program. None are looking for any particular type. Amy Rogers at Pace, said that they want individuals who know who they are, who have a well-developed self-awareness. Other characteristics she looks for are kindness and students who care about their craft and who are not star-crazy. Most importantly, they are on the student's side. They want the student to feel comfortable, and most will give tours of their facility and offer opportunities to talk with staff and students. They realize that it is a stressful time, and they want to do what they can to get to know that young person standing in front of them who may spend the next four years of their life in that particular school.

So, if you're one of the students who'll be getting your ticket east soon, go out and let them see a well-rested you. As Jim Clark, of Syracuse University said, "They want to see you at your best!"

Using Boston Conservatory as an example, here is the list of questions each school considered. Neil Donohoe, the Director of Boston Conservatory spoke with me.

Can you describe the audition process?

Last year had 600 applicants, and accepted 70. They normally accept 48, and will accept less this year. Want to return to more intimate program so they can maintain the relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

Can you describe the Audition process?

2 contrasting songs, a ballad, and an up-tempo, looking for quality of instrument, phrasing, color, acting; a healthy voice. In the up-tempo, looking for energy, clarity and the ability to handle rhythm.

Mr. Donohoe emphasized that they do not want to hear the extremes of the voice. He doesn't want to hear extreme highs, or lows. Many students feel that they need to show their full range. Not a good idea.

Students have 10 minutes for their audition: 2 minutes for each song, 2 minutes for each monologue, and 2-3 minutes to chat with the Director and with one or two other people who are at the audition.

Students can choose their first song.

What kind of music would you like to hear? Songs that allow for discovery, and emotion. Unusual music is fine. Check on the school's website for "overdone list." No-no's this year include songs from *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. Would love to hear the beautiful old simple classics, such as *When you Wish Upon a Star*.

Should the choice of music be age-appropriate? Mostly; students should choose something that they have experienced or can imagine experiencing.

Do students have an opportunity to rehearse with the accompanist? Yes; cuts should be marked clearly, and of course, don't use lead sheets, or ask the accompanist to transpose. Put music back to back in a 3-ring notebook, **in non-glare**



STUDENT RECITAL DATES

DANVILLE

Sunday, January 20th at 3pm
Peace Lutheran Church
3201 Camino Tassajara, Danville, CA 94506
Directions @ www.peacejourney.org
For more information, contact Sue Field:
mezzo54@comcast.net or (650)796-1829

MARIN COUNTY

Sunday, February 10th, 2008 at 3pm
The Tamalpais in Greenbrae
Contact Rebecca Jones: rojones@vocalarts.com or 415.453.8237

SOUTH BAY

Saturday, February 23rd, 2008 at 3:00pm
Rehearsal 2:00 in the Terraces recital hall
The Terraces of Los Gatos
800 Blossom Hill Rd.
Los Gatos, CA 95032
For more information contact Katya Roemer or Peggy Spool
Katya: katyaroeimer@mac.com or (408) 996-1038
Peggy: pmspool@pacbell.net or (408) 267-2615

NAPA

Sunday February 24, 2008 at 3:30pm
Redwood Retirement Home
2350 Redwood Road, Napa
For more information, contact Vicky Van Dewark: 707-258-1204

WALNUT CREEK

Saturday, April 19, 2008 at 3pm
Rossmoor - Gateway Clubhouse, Fireside Room
Contact Karen Anderson:
operakar@sbcglobal.net or (925) 372-3660

SAN FRANCISCO

Spring Late Bloomers Voice Party
Originally announced for Sunday May 4, the date has been changed to Saturday, May 3, at 2 pm, at the home of Ellie Cohen in Oakland. Mark the date and register soon, remember the last one was full 6 weeks before the date.
Contact Ellie Cohen: elliecoh@gmail.com

Inside College Musical Theatre Auditions

A Study by Lucy Beck

Auditions at any stage can be scary, but put yourself in the shoes of a 17 or 18 year old who has a mere 90 seconds to show what they're made of and you've got the real-life nail biting, mouth drying experience of thousands of young aspiring performers.

Within weeks now, hopeful musical theatre performers will be making plane reservations to dance, act, and sing their way into the demanding world of musical theatre training programs. Even in the most generous of auditions, students have only 10 minutes to display that they have what that particular school is looking for.

In order to answer questions about what some of the most prestigious East Coast musical theatre programs want to see in an applicant, I talked with faculty at five East Coast schools: Syracuse, Pace, University of Michigan, Boston Conservatory and Penn State. Several other schools on my list, University of Cincinnati, Carnegie-Melon, and NYU Tisch have not responded as yet. A report of West Coast schools is planned.

Questions I asked schools were consistent, but I encouraged people to tell me what they felt was important for students auditioning at their school. Consequently, not all interviews fit neatly into my questions.

First, a look at the stats will give you an appreciation of how competitive this major has become: At all the schools, there is a three-part evaluation; singing, acting, and dance, with dance, also including more than one style, usually being first.

Boston Conservatory

Had 600 applicants last year, accepted 70. Normally accept 48, and will accept fewer this year. Students have 10 minutes for their audition: 2 minutes for each song, 2 minutes for each monologue, and 2-3 minute chat with the Director.

Penn State

Last year had 397 applicants and will accept 12-15 this year. Students have 90 seconds for the vocal portion, and one minute for the contemporary monologue.

Pace

Expects 400 applicants, will audition 100, and accept 16. Students have 10 minutes to sing two contrasting songs and perform a monologue. This is followed by an interview.

University of Michigan

Expects about 500 applicants. Did not say how many they accept. Students start with a dance audition, followed by singing two contrasting 16 measure songs.

Syracuse

Dance is first, followed by singing. Students have 90 seconds per song, with some flexibility.

What do all these schools wish to see or not see in an applicant?

Realness; who this young person is. To quote Amy Rogers, the Musical Theatre

Program Director at Pace: I want students to come with an open heart, to share their self, not their fears; to be present in their material and to be present in the room as a human being.

A healthy voice, with healthy technique. All the schools require an up-tempo and a ballad. Boston Conservatory wants to hear legit, and Pace prefers that both songs be sung in a speech-centered technique. Most importantly, as Mary Saunders-Barton, Head of Voice Instruction in Musical Theatre at Penn State, says, the emphasis is on natural and genuine expression. Although they expect good technique in voice, they don't expect a polished performer.

The basics in musicianship; Pitch, support, articulation, rhythm, phrasing and style and clarity. Mary Sanders says that schools are interested in a student's musical background because the demand for sight-singing skills and overall musical knowledge is increasingly important in today's job market.

"Teachability" as coined by Raymond Sage, the Director of Penn State New Musical Festival at Penn State. Raymond said that "we will often vocalize a young singer in the audition to see if she is able to take instruction and be willing to be taught how to belt in a healthy manner. I would much rather have a raw talent with a mediocre performance that is trainable, than an enormously gifted singer/actor with a polished audition who is over-confident and hard to teach!" Neil Donohoe, The Director of Boston Conservatory, said that a student must be teachable. Jim Clark, Director of the Musical Theatre Dept at Syracuse University, used the word flexibility. They evaluate that by asking students to sing one of their songs in a different way, or to sing another song. All the schools also evaluate this in their interview.

An emotional connection to the music. All the schools want students to choose songs that allow for discovery and emotion. Mary Saunders said that "showing a sense of humor, delight in performing and confident preparation are huge advantages." Students need to present songs that are age and technique appropriate. To make that emotional connection, they should choose something that expresses what they have experienced or can imagine experiencing. All the schools like to hear new or unusual music, but students need to consider the difficulty of accompaniment.

None of the schools want to hear the extremes of the voice; especially not the extreme loud highs. Neil Donohoe, Boston Conservatory said that he would love to hear the beautiful old simple classics, such as *When You Wish Upon a Star*.

Appropriate dress. None of the schools indicated that how a student dressed would affect their chances of being accepted; just said that it should be "appropriate."

A student who is prepared. All the school emphasized that there is a lot of important information on their websites, so students need to know the specific requirements of each school, and of the major.

A student who is prepared for the auditions. Bring water, dance clothes, singing outfit, and street outfit. Have the music back-to-back in a 3-ring notebook that lies flat. Some schools, like Boston Conservatory, want the music in non-glare