

A DEMONSTRATION OF PEDAGOGICAL METHODS BASED ON RECENT RESEARCH TO ENABLE THE MATURE FEMALE SINGER TO SUSTAIN VOCAL COMPETANCY AND HEALTH

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SUMMARY

The researcher proposes a workshop based on her doctoral research of a study of vocal function and efficiency in the mature female singer and whether effective pedagogy can promote sustained healthy vocal production and competence. The early stages of this work were presented at PEVoC in Florence.

Like all instruments, the voice is subject to wear and tear; it can become dysfunctional, the vocal folds may swell due to infection, they may bleed due to misuse and they may change structurally and asymmetrically due to variations in the hormonal system. In addition, the respiratory system—the power source for the voice— could become clogged with mucus and its function severely reduced, such that the pharynx can become sore and constricted.

This research investigated the potential benefits of pedagogical intervention on any negative features of female vocal aging in older singers. Accordingly, part of the research and review of the literature has led the researcher to devise a series of targeted exercises to assess the function of key components of the voice: respiratory function, agility, onset, stamina and resonance, and also, to act as a tool to measure the impact of pedagogical intervention over time. Comparison data was drawn from a matched control group without the experience of the pedagogical intervention.

Early findings have produced statistically significant results which support the hypotheses that the vocal competency of the mature female singer can be sustained through effective pedagogy. The researcher will discuss and demonstrate the methods which she found to be most effective, including techniques for:

- Warm-Up & Cool Down
- Postural Alignment
- Respiration
- Onset and Offset
- Constriction
- Agility
- Tongue Root Tension