VOICEPrints

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February 22, 2026 6-8 PM EST Online via Zoom

Play-based Learning, Engagement, and Lesson Pacing

Presented by: Nikki Loney

NYSTA

Claudia Friedlander, Featured Contributor

Justin John Moniz and Minnita Daniel-Cox, Contributors

Elena Blyskal
Contributor

VOICEPrints

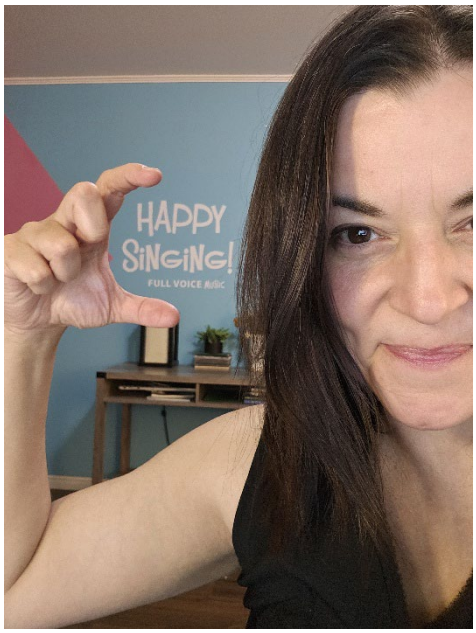
Ronald Land, Editor-in-Chief
Nico de Villiers, Associate Editor

CALENDAR: Upcoming Events 2026

OCTOBER	DECEMBER	FEBRUARY	MAY
October 5, 2025 5:30 PM National Opera Center, 330 7th Avenue, 7th Floor, NYC Broadway: 16/32 Bar Audition Workshop	December 7, 2025 6:30pm National Opera Center 330 7th Avenue, 7th Floor, NYC An Operatic Masterclass Presented by: Alison Bolshoi	February 22, 2026 6-8pm EST Online via Zoom **Play-based Learning, Engagement, and Lesson Planning** Presented by: **Nikki Loney**	May 3, 2026 6:00pm National Opera Center 330 7th Avenue, 7th Floor NYC **Echoes from the East: East Asian Repertoire and Japanese Song Masterclass.** Presented by: **Sahoko Sato Timpone**

Play-based Learning, Engagement, and Lesson Pacing in the Voice Studio

A playful voice studio is not only more fun, it is also more effective. In this 90-minute interactive presentation, we will explore how the power of play and genuine engagement can transform your teaching. Discover the simple, but often overlooked, guidelines for better lesson pacing and learn how to make your vocal pedagogy clear, approachable, and easy to understand for beginners of all ages. No more boring lessons. You will leave inspired to bring more joy, connection, and momentum into every session.



Inspired by the youngest singers in her private studio, **Nikki Loney** encourages teachers to rethink what a singing lesson can look like for a child. She is the founder of FULL VOICE Music, where she and her team collaborate with voice experts, music education specialists, and children's composers to create engaging resources that teachers trust and students love. FULL VOICE supports teachers and students worldwide. Nikki is an active member of NATS, and as host of The FULL VOICE Podcast (part of the NATSCast Network), she connects with a global audience of independent voice teachers.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Elizabeth Saunders, President

Every three years, a new slate of officers is elected for the next three-year term. Nominations are made by a nomination committee made up of representatives from the board of directors, and an election is held for the entire NYSTA membership.

After months of searching and many people discussed and interviewed, the nomination committee has selected the following people to present to the membership for a vote:

Sahoko Sato Timpone – Nominee for President

We are very pleased to invite Sahoko Sato Timpone back into NYSTA leadership as the nominee for President. Sahoko is a native of Tokyo who grew up in Germany and the United States. She is currently an associate professor of voice at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and previously served on the faculty at Florida State University (2017-2025). She is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music (MM), the New England Conservatory (BM), and Rutgers University (DMA), where she received the Irene Alm Memorial Prize for excellence in performance and scholarly research. During the 2024-2025 season, she was a Visiting Scholar at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp's research unit Labo XIX & XX for research on Belgian Art Song. Additionally, she is a licensed kimono dresser and has studied Japanese tea ceremony (Urasenke School) and Japanese kabuki-style dance (Sōke Fujima School).

Elizabeth Saunders – Nominee for Vice-President

At Sahoko's request and with approval by the nominating committee, I have been nominated to step into the role of Vice-President. Since Sahoko has been away from NYSTA leadership for a few years, this pairing will allow for a smoother transition of duties and will serve to support Sahoko in her tasks on behalf of NYSTA.

Tracy Koch – Nominee for Secretary

Tracy Koch is the owner and teacher of the thriving Koch Private Studio of Voice and Piano in Bloomington, Illinois, where she is currently staff director for the Midwest Institute of Opera (MIOpera) Ms. Koch is also the artistic director and director of the dynamic all girl a cappella group "Beauties and the Beat". Ms. Koch earned her M.M. in Vocal Performance and Literature from Northwestern University.

Benjamin Berman will continue in his position as Treasurer.

Diane Aragona is stepping down from her position as Registrar, and despite a number of interviews, we still seek the right person to take on that job.

If you are interested in being considered for the position of Registrar, or if you know someone who would be a good fit, please do not hesitate to email me at president@nyst.org to discuss the responsibilities it entails and the qualities we hope to find. We are very eager to find the right person for this role.

It has been my sincere pleasure and honor to serve two terms as NYSTA President, and I am excited at the possibility of Sahoko leading the Association in the coming term, and Tracy serving as our secretary.

Please be on the lookout for the official ballot in the coming weeks.

-Elizabeth Saunders

Meet the Director of the Professional Development Program

Colin Briskey

Dear Members,

Happy new year - I hope your holidays were restful and joyous and that you're eager to tackle the new year! Let me introduce myself - I'm Colin Briskey, the current Professional Development Program Director. Though I've been on the board for a while, now seems like a good time to introduce myself to the membership, as we have a lot of new faces and exciting plans going on behind the scenes. Expect to see articles from me and others in upcoming VOICEPrints editions. In this letter, I'll talk about myself and what I'm interested in as a voice teacher and pedagogue. I'll also talk a little bit about some of what we're working on for the Professional Development Program.

I love voice lessons. Since my first lessons with my high school teacher, Erin Guinup, voice lessons have been my favorite part of the week. As someone who grew up with very little innate musical talent and skill, I've found deep comfort in knowing that you can **learn** to sing. Musicianship, artistry, and vocal technique are skills that can be acquired. Singing, specifically, is a motor skill that can be broken down into tiny steps and acquired, mastered, and made excellent regardless of the starting place. This is primarily where my interests lie today. How can I help facilitate reliable, replicable, and effective singing in my students and clients? What do I need to learn to help singers craft a voice that isn't just sustainable, but authentic and empowering? That's what keeps me curious and keeps me learning.

My interest in teaching was first piqued when I took Dr. Kelly Holst's Vocal Pedagogy course during my Bachelor of Music (Music Theater) studies at Oklahoma City University. With encouragement from many of the faculty at OCU, including my own studio teacher Dr. Courtney Crouse, I began teaching lessons to middle schoolers and high schoolers while I was still in undergrad. After undergrad I created a career out of Starbucks, teaching, and performing. After about a year I was able to cut Starbucks out of the equation. I had a thriving private studio, but I felt stuck as a teacher. Luckily I had a vibrant community of other teachers (shoutout Tahoma NATS Chapter), performers, and mentors who helped steer me in the right direction - grad school.

It's definitely not for everyone, but my time in grad school was game changing for me. In 2022, I graduated MFA in Musical Theater Vocal Pedagogy from Boston Conservatory at Berklee. While there I studied under the leadership of Kevin Wilson and in the voice studio of former PDP Director Jared Trudeau. Somehow, I've been lucky enough to turn my favorite part of the week, my voice lesson, into pretty much my entire work week - I'm living my dream.

Now, I live in Cleveland, OH and I'm currently an Assistant Professor of Music Theater - Voice at Oberlin Conservatory. We're in the first year of our brand new Music Theater program. Before my appointment at Oberlin I served as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Voice at Baldwin Wallace Conservatory where I worked with singers in their Music Theater, Music Therapy, and Music Education programs.

Outside of my work at Oberlin, I keep a private studio of professional music theater clients and a few high schoolers focused on attending music theater programs. I also serve as the Lead Vocal Technician for Theatre Major - a boutique college coaching company geared for students looking to major in theater or musical theater in college. Oh, and I try to do musicals in the summer when I can! Like all of us, I love what I do and that leads me to wear many, many hats. It's worth it.

My studies with Jared Trudeau at Boston Conservatory led me to NYSTA. When I was graduating from my MFA Jared was ready to move on from his role here and I was eager to dive back into the world outside of academia. I'm grateful to Jared, the Board, and President Saunders who have welcomed me and provided much needed help and support while we overhaul the back end of the PDP courses. Speaking of help, one of our newest Board members, Claudia Friedlander, has been essential in providing insight, knowledge, and momentum for the changes we're working on.

Here's what you can expect to see in the next few months from PDP; smoother interface, clarity on the contents and goals of each course, and regular updates from PDP in VOICEPrints. In the longer-term members can expect updated course content and new course offerings. I would love to hear directly from members regarding what kind of content you'd like to see - nystapdpdirector@gmail.com. I look forward to serving our membership and learning more about the voice!

Sincerely,

Colin Briskey
Professional Development Program Director

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings Gentle Readers and Happy New Year!!

I hope you all had a fabulous holiday season and find yourselves rested and ready to approach a new semester.

This first issue of VOICEPrints in 2026 showcases elements of NYSTA's modernized branding format. Please note our new logo and color scheme. Included is Part 3 of Claudia Friedlander's four-part feature on Myofascial Release, a book review by Elena Blyskal, and a short installment from *New York Singing Teachers' Association: Its Story.*

This January, the powerhouse American mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves retired from the operatic stage. The last Issue featured an interview with Roberta Alexander by Justin John Moniz and Minnita Daniel-Cox. This issue contains another of their interviews, this time with Ms. Graves titled *"Let the Work Speak: Denyce Graves on Service, Struggle and the Shape of a Life in Song.*

Consider adding to your New Year Resolutions a commitment to contributing to VOICEPrints. We are always considering submissions to the journal, especially at the beginning of a New Year. You can submit an article or feature either by email to voiceprints@nyst.org or directly to me at ron.land@gmail.com – or on our updated website. If you have any questions on what or how to contribute – just let me know and we can talk about it.

Also, please take special note to the President's letter from Elizabeth Saunders. She is at the end of her term as President and has highlighted the nomination and election process for a new President. Elizabeth has been a true pleasure to work with and has made my transition as Editor-in-Chief of VP an effortless one. Please join me in thanking her for and celebrating her term as President – make one of my cocktails and raise it high to Elizabeth – CHEERS!

Speaking of cocktails – since this issue finds you in the dead of winter – I offer my version of a warm and soothing hot toddy…

Until next issue – stay warm and hydrated!

R

Ronald Land
Editor-in-Chief

Ron's Hot Toddy

1 cup of Hot Water or brewed tea (regular or flavored.) Since I am fond of all things Southern, I like Luzianne© (echoes Sweet Tea), or Celestial Seasonings County Peach Passion© (because of the divine pairing that is peach and bourbon)

1-1/2 oz Bourbon (you can substitute any whiskey or rum)

1T Honey (more if you like it that way)

½ oz fresh lemon juice

Garnish: Cinnamon stick, lemon slice, star anise, or lemon rind studded with clove – you do you.

I mix my ingredients in a 2-cup glass measure while I let some boiling water heat my mug. Steep the tea for your desired strength before adding the other ingredients. Dump the warming water, add your toddy ingredients to the mug, and garnish. Stay warm and ENJOY!

Book Review: *Voices of Influence: Exploring the Journey of a Teacher and Student in the Voice Studio*

by Brian Manternach

Reviewed by Elena Blyskal

Elena Blyskal

While I can't speak for all voice teachers, I would presume that many of us pursue applied teaching not necessarily because we're fascinated by vocal anatomy, acoustics, or motor learning (while of course, we might be) – but because we genuinely like people. We are truly interested in getting to know our students, discovering what excites them, celebrating their individuality, guiding them to become their bravest and most expressive selves, and, likely, learning about their lives outside our studio. This deep investment in another human being inevitably invites us to self-reflect. Indeed, how many of our students have taught us about ourselves? How often are we reminded to follow the advice we give our students?

We may also have been inspired to teach by our relationships with our previous voice teachers, particularly if they showed genuine investment in us. Brian Manternach's Voices of Influence is a celebration of this humanity and an exploration of the unique teacher-student relationship. Manternach describes this book as "part memoir, part coming-of-age story, and part pedagogical guide"[1] as he describes the influence of his doctoral voice teacher, Robert Harrison. He reflects on both his and Harrison's journeys as students and teachers, covering their early years, career trajectories, pedagogical practices, and artistic beliefs. While ever-the-responsible academic Manternach acknowledges his bias, this book avoids becoming a saccharine tribute, exploring areas of disagreement while maintaining an overarching affection and respect. Therefore, this book is less of a niche "You had to be there" biography. Instead, consider it a deep dive into what we love most about our profession.

[1]Brian Matternach, *Voices of Influence* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2025), 4

Brian Manternach

Part I ("The Journey") explores Harrison and Manternach's early years: formative musical and personal experiences, educational struggles and successes, and how these shaped their thoughts and beliefs. This section was the highlight of the book for me; if you are similarly interested in what makes people tick, it may be your favorite, too. What resonated most was reading about the moments that did not come easily: academic challenges, over forty college teaching rejections, a humbling audition season in NYC, personal sacrifices for one's career, and even a "resume of failures" (which I love the idea of). It's not that I took pleasure in reading these disappointments. Rather, these stories are a refreshing reminder of what we intellectually know to be true: no path is linear, and no one is immune from failure – even people we revere. There is so much we just assume happened smoothly for our teachers and colleagues, particularly when social media provides a convenient filter for what we share with the world. Manternach normalizes that this is not the case.

Part II ("Lessons, Philosophies, and Practices") describes Harrison in the studio – both his technical and artistic beliefs and the personal quirks that students fondly remember. Manternach wisely starts with the latter ("Embracing Eccentricities") before branching off into technique, which includes chapters entitled "Respiration", "Balanced Phonation", and "Choosing Purposeful Exercises", among others. Admittedly, I was more compelled by the personal biographies in Part I than by Part II's technical chapters. Perhaps my brain had its fill of technique talk after teaching a semester of vocal pedagogy, and while I didn't study with Harrison, Manternach and I already share many of the same reference points. Still,

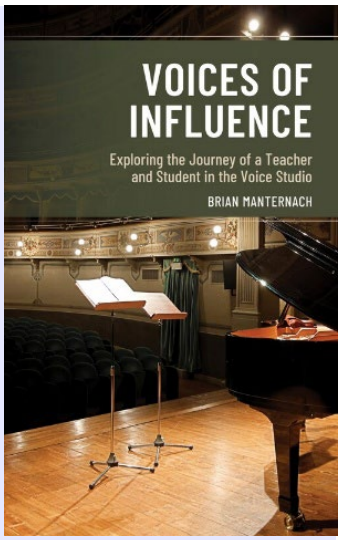
this book would be incomplete without discussing what Harrison taught, and I have a few profound takeaways. First, I appreciated Manternach's reflection on what made Harrison unique – his collection of shoes, his hearty laugh, and his trademark phrases. He offers an important reminder to be unapologetically ourselves in the studio, and how this may have far greater value than we realize:

> *"...perhaps some of his outrageousness was to aid the learning process. Once again, cognitive science has demonstrated that memories are more deeply ingrained when they are accompanied by strong emotions. We often think first of pain and trauma being the culprits of certain long-held memories. But laughter and amusement are signs of strong emotions, as well, and may also successfully embed certain lessons into our minds. There may also have been another motive…He wanted us to be courageous enough to bring the fullness of who we are to the work we were presenting."*[2]

Finally, I was intrigued to read about how Harrison experiences music through his senses. He describes "sensations as a gateway to the intellect"[3], which is so easy for this cognitive learner and teacher to forget. Whether the technical information presented in Part II is new to you or not, there will undoubtedly be deeper ideas to inspire your teaching.

Part III ("Legacy") explores how we may remember our teachers. Manternach discusses whether we should "cite" our teachers in the studio, how to fairly assess their teachings as our pedagogical knowledge evolves, and when to diverge from what we've been taught. He thoughtfully presents his opinions without offering definitive answers (indeed, there are none). The book concludes with a look at what it means to be your "teacher's student"[4]. With Manternach's trademark honesty, humor, and open-heartedness, it's clear that Harrison's dedication to being "insistently himself"[5] lives on. There are also a few appendices featuring a nearly unedited interview with Harrison, a chronology of his life and career, and some final quotes.

Manternach's hope for writing Voices of Influence was that "you may come to value your own path (however circuitous) [and] realize a deeper appreciation for your influential mentors and unique experiences"[6]. This book certainly delivers. I have always been fascinated by the role legacy plays in voice teaching. Upon retiring, my voice teacher invited me to take whatever I wanted from her studio; it still means so much to see her name in what are now my scores and books. I am also well aware of past teachers' catchphrases and mannerisms that find their way into my studio every day. I suspect many voice teachers have similar stories. *Voices of Influence* is a welcome outlet to further reflect on influence and legacy and had me wishing that I could call other teachers to thank them (especially one I appreciated less at the time). So, call your teachers, dear reader, and may you come to embrace all the quirks, experiences, and beliefs that make you and your students insistently themselves.



[2]Manternach, 51

[3]Manternach, 57

[4]Manternach, 157

[5]Manternach, 51

[6]Manternach, 5

Elena Blyskal (she/her) is a singer-actor and voice teacher based in New York City. As a performer, favorite credits include Lucille Frank (u/s) in Parade, Jenny in Company, Sibella (u/s, performed) in Gentleman's Guide…, Rosalie in School of Rock, Queen of the Night in Die Zauberflöte, and Madame Mao (cover) in Nixon in China. Elena earned her Doctor of Musical Arts in Vocal Pedagogy and Performance at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, where her research interests included mindfulness in the voice studio and cabaret song. She currently teaches musical theatre voice at Manhattanville University, classical voice at Western Connecticut State University, and Vocal Pedagogy at CUNY Queens College. For more information, please visit elenablyskal.com.

Interview: "Let the Work Speak: Denyce Graves on Service, Struggle, and the Shape of a Life in Song"

by Justin John Moniz and Minnita Daniel-Cox

Drawing extensively from her own reflections during a 2020 interview with Dr. Justin John Moniz and Dr. Minnita Daniel Cox, this article explores formative moments including a prison outreach performance, her return to singing after serious illness at the Washington National Cathedral following September 11, and her Metropolitan Opera debut as a collective community milestone. The piece concludes with her final operatic appearance at the Metropolitan Opera as Maria in Porgy and Bess*, framing this final bow as a summative expression of her values as an artist and mentor.*

Denyce Graves

The Measure of a Voice

When we talk about Denyce Graves, we often reach first for the markers that signal arrival: the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, the world's great conductors, the roles that have come to define an era of mezzo-soprano singing. These milestones are real, and they matter. They locate her in history. But when Graves herself is asked to reflect on her proudest artistic achievements, she does something quietly revelatory. She redirects the conversation away from institutional prestige and toward moments of human exchange—moments that were never meant to be witnessed, reviewed, or canonized.

What emerges from her own words is not a portrait of achievement as accumulation, but of achievement as alignment. Alignment between voice and purpose. Between fear and surrender. Between technical mastery and moral imagination. For Graves, pride does not reside in being heard by the many, but in being *available* to the moment—especially when the moment demands vulnerability rather than certainty.

Ms. Graves as Carmen

Singing Where Opera Was Never Invited

One of the moments Graves names most readily does not take place on a major stage. It happens during her early professional years, while she was completing an Artist-in-Residence engagement that took her into schools, community centers, and nursing homes.[i] These "informances," as she calls them, were demanding in every way—four or five performances a day, each involving travel, setup, explanation, and singing. Near the end of that residency, she was asked to do something that stopped her cold.

"Ms. Graves," she was told, "there's something that we would really love for you to do… we wondered if you could go sing in this prison."

Her response was immediate and unvarnished. “Uhh, I don’t know… about that.”

She recalls thinking about the fundamental difference between opera audiences and the audience she was being asked to serve. Opera-goers come by choice. They buy tickets. They arrive with expectation, curiosity, or devotion to the art form. A prison audience has not asked for opera. They have not chosen it. They may have no reason to trust it—or her.

“I thought, nobody’s gonna want to hear this. Why are we taking opera to the prison?” she remembers. “They’re gonna laugh… nobody’s gonna want to hear about arias.”

What makes this recollection so powerful is its honesty. Graves does not present herself as instinctively brave or selfless. She presents herself as human—resistant, uncertain, aware of her own fear. And yet, she also recognizes something crucial: that fear, if left unexamined, would become an obstacle not only for her, but for everyone in the room.

When she arrived at the prison, the environment confirmed her apprehension. Guards everywhere. Orientation protocols detailing what she could and could not do. As the men were brought in—an all-men’s facility—she found herself studying their faces, caught in the reflexive judgments that fear often produces. And then another realization landed, quietly but decisively.

“If I’m nervous, and if I’m uneasy with them,” she thought, “nobody’s going to get anything out of this exchange because they’re gonna be able to feel and sense my apprehension.”

That moment of self-awareness becomes the fulcrum of the story. Graves understands that artistry, at its core, is relational. The body speaks before the voice ever does. If she entered the room guarded, the exchange would fail before it began. And so she did what she knew how to do when technique was not enough.

She prayed.

“Okay, God, I’m here,” she said. “Just use me.”

What followed is one of the most instructive episodes of her career. She began with the “Seguidilla” from *Carmen*—already a daring choice in a prison setting—and then made an even bolder decision. She invited a man from the audience to play Don José. The guards intervened immediately. “Oh, Miss Graves, you can’t do that!”

“I’m fine,” she replied.

She explained the story. She explained the stakes. And then she danced around him, taunted him, inhabited Carmen fully—playfully, provocatively, unapologetically. In that instant, opera ceased to be something presented *to* an audience and became something created *with* them.

She watched the room change.

“I could look in the audience, and I saw some of those faces that came in like stone begin to lighten. I saw light come into people’s faces. I saw some people starting to smile.”

At the end of the program, men approached her—not with mockery, but with affirmation. “I’m so proud of you.” “You keep singing your opera.” “I’m not getting out of here, but I’m gonna be thinking about you.” “You go, girl.”

Graves describes leaving that prison unable to stop crying. Not because she had done something heroic, but because something had broken open—*in her*.

“I didn’t wanna go. There was so much resistance. And finally something broke open and we were all able to receive.”

What lingers most is the inversion at the heart of her reflection. She went in believing she had nothing to offer. She left knowing she had been given everything.

“The gift was mine in being there.”

For Graves, this is not sentimentality. It is a lived philosophy of art. Music, she insists, is a universal language not because it is benign, but because it reaches places where words have no access. It speaks to the soul—not as decoration, but as truth.

After Silence, the Call to Sing Again

The second moment Graves names as one of her proudest achievements carries a very different public profile, but the same internal logic. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, she was asked to sing at Washington National Cathedral.[ii] The request itself was familiar; as a Washington, DC–born artist, she had long maintained a relationship with the cathedral and often sang for significant services or dedications when she was available.

This time, however, the circumstances were extraordinary.

Graves recalls preparing backstage as she always did—focused, grounded, unconcerned with speculation. She was told that there might be dignitaries present, but nothing more. When she stepped forward to sing the Lord’s Prayer, the reality revealed itself all at once.

“Is that Ford? Oh my God, that looks like Jimmy Carter. Is that Clinton?”

Five presidents were present.

What she expresses next is not bravado, but gratitude. “I just thank God that I

was unaware,” she says, recognizing how easily that knowledge could have interfered with the work. The singer’s task, as she understands it, is to surrender fully to the moment—not to inflate it with ego or fear, but to offer herself in service to it.

Yet the true weight of that performance lies beneath its symbolism. The year preceding it had been devastating. Graves had suffered for years from cluster headaches—occipital neuralgia—that were sometimes so severe she could not function. She managed them with medication, carefully staying ahead of the pain. Then, while in Chicago for a new production of *Carmen*, everything changed in an instant. “I hemorrhaged. Just like that. I sneezed.” The result was immediate and terrifying. Surgeries

followed. All engagements were canceled. And then came the silence—four months of not speaking, not singing, not knowing whether her career had reached its end.

“I was thinking that that was going to be the end of me. The end of the career. The whole thing.”

The cathedral performance was the first major appearance after that silence. She approached it with the same unease she had felt in the prison years earlier—uncertainty, vulnerability, the awareness that nothing was guaranteed. But she went forward anyway.

The performance resonated far beyond that day, traveling across the world and altering the trajectory of her public life. Invitations followed. Visibility expanded. Yet Graves remains clear about what mattered most.

“It wasn’t until later that I saw the impact that that performance had.”

What she marks as pride is not the acclaim, but the fact of return. The voice came back—not as entitlement, but as gift. That experience recalibrated her understanding of career and calling alike. From that moment on, she knew that singing was never something she could assume. It was something she was entrusted with, again and again.

The Met Debut: A Collective Arrival

Only after recounting these moments does Graves speak about her Metropolitan Opera debut—the achievement most people expect to hear first.[iii] Even here, she refuses to center the narrative on herself alone.

Her mother organized a bus trip from Washington, DC. Two hundred and fifty people came. As Graves sang the “Habanera,” she looked out and saw faces that represented not only support, but survival. Faces that carried the weight of where she came from, and the cost of getting there.

When the aria ended, the response cut through the grandeur of the house: “Go girl! Go Denyce!”

That moment crystallized something essential. This was not only her debut. It was a communal arrival.

Graves grew up in southeast DC, raised by a single mother who worked three jobs. She was not a popular child. She was different—“othered”—called “White Girl,” mocked for her love of classical music, misunderstood by peers and sometimes even by those who loved her most. Her desire to study opera was met with confusion. College itself was uncharted territory. Opera seemed incomprehensible.

“What do you mean you’re going to college for singing?” her mother asked. “You already know how to sing.”

The Met debut did not erase those doubts. It honored the journey through them. It made visible the long chain of belief that had sustained her—especially the labor of women. Her mother. Her grandmother. The matriarchs who raised her. The teachers who intervened, encouraged, insisted.

“This was a moment for all of us,” she says. “For my mother. For my grandmother. For all the great matriarchs in my family.”

The pride she describes is expansive. It belongs not to individual success, but to collective endurance. Opera, in that moment, became a language her community could finally see themselves inside—not as outsiders, but as witnesses to possibility.

Survival, Faith, and the Discipline of Excellence

Threaded throughout Graves’s reflections is a clear-eyed account of survival. Racism. Misrecognition. Financial precarity. Health crises. Institutional resistance. She names these realities without theatricality and without denial. But she also refuses to allow them to become the defining narrative of her life.

Her approach is grounded in a discipline passed down through faith, family, and mentorship. She speaks of growing up deeply religious—church seven days a week, teachings that emphasized endurance and trust. “The battle is not yours,” she learned. “Let the Lord fight your battle.”[iv]

Equally formative was advice she received early in her career from Marilyn Horne: “You have one job, and that’s to sing well. Period.”

That principle became a compass. Graves did not ignore injustice; she simply refused to let it distract her from the work. Preparation became her armor. Excellence, her language of insistence. Again and again, she chose to show up early, warmed up, ready—allowing the work to speak when words would not.

Teaching Without Standing at the Front of the Room

For voice teachers, Denyce Graves’s legacy extends far beyond repertoire or sound. She teaches through embodiment. Through presence. Through the way she inhabits space with authority that is never defensive.

Watching her perform reveals lessons no syllabus can fully capture: how intention organizes breath; how psychological clarity stabilizes technique; how silence can carry as much meaning as sound. Her career demonstrates that longevity is inseparable from self-knowledge, and that vocal health is as much about boundaries as it is about mechanics.

Perhaps most importantly, she models an ethics of artistry. Where we sing matters. How we show up matters. Whether we remain open to being changed by the act of singing matters.

A Final Bow That Tells the Truth

There is something deeply fitting about the way Denyce Graves has chosen to close her operatic chapter: not with a victory lap, but with a work that insists on community, resilience, and the moral weight of witness. On January 24, she makes her final operatic appearance at the Metropolitan Opera as Maria in *Porgy and Bess*—a final bow that feels aligned with everything she describes as “pride”: the moments where the voice becomes a bridge, and the work becomes larger than the self.

Maria is not the protagonist. She is the conscience of Catfish Row—the keeper of memory, the teller of truth. To end an operatic career in that role is not retreat; it is clarity. Graves began her Met journey as Carmen—defiant, electric, unforgettable. She ends it as Maria—grounded, steadfast, deeply human. The arc is unmistakable.

The Measure That Remains

Denyce Graves's voice will live on—in memory, in teaching, in the countless singers who learned what authority sounds like by watching her claim it. But her most enduring legacy may be the way she has taught us to measure success differently.

Not by how far the voice carries, but by how deeply it reaches.
Not by who is listening, but by what opens when they do.
Not by what is taken, but by what is given—and received—in return.

In that sense, her career offers more than inspiration. It offers orientation. A reminder of why we sing at all: not to be seen, but to serve; not to conquer space, but to inhabit it fully, truthfully, and with love.

[i] Denyce Graves, interview by Justin John Moniz and Minnita Daniel-Cox, Zoom video call, September 10, 2020.
[ii] Graves, interview, September 10, 2020.
[iii] Graves, interview, September 10, 2020.
[iv] Graves, interview, September 10, 2020.

Dr. Justin John Moniz serves as Associate Director of Vocal Performance and Coordinator of Vocal Pedagogy at New York University's (NYU) Steinhardt School where he holds the rank of Associate Professor. Moniz is also a member of the Vocal Arts Faculty at Manhattan School of Music where he teaches vocal wellness and physiology. His students regularly appear on Broadway, off-Broadway, on national tours, in regional theaters and opera houses, and on national television. A leading expert on contemporary vocal pedagogy, Moniz is regularly engaged as a guest clinician and consultant for organizations including the National Association of Teachers of Singing, National Opera Association, The Royal Conservatory of Music, New England Conservatory, Boston University, and Berklee College of Music. As a voice teacher, researcher, and NASM Certified Personal Trainer, he is particularly passionate about identifying the parallels between the worlds of voice science and sports medicine, more specifically concerning vocal load, efficiency, and sustainability. In 2025, he was named the Ellen Faull Master Teacher for the NATS Intern Program and earned the NYU Steinhardt Teaching Excellence Award. Moniz serves as an associate editor for the Journal of Singing, where he writes the "The Versatile Voice" column. www.justinjohnmoniz.com

Dr. Minnita Daniel-Cox serves as Professor of Voice and Coordinator of the Voice Area at the University of Dayton, where she teaches applied voice, directs musical and opera productions, oversees the Dayton Opera Apprentice Program, and leads the Vocal Performance Institute for young singers. A versatile soprano and scholar, she is the founder of the Dunbar Music Archive, dedicated to preserving and promoting musical settings of the poetry of Paul Laurence Dunbar. Her research has been featured by the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the College Music Society, and the International Society for Music Education, among others. Daniel-Cox has secured more than $350,000 in external funding for her Dunbar work, including two grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and support from the Mellon Foundation. As a performer, she appears frequently with the Dayton Philharmonic, Springfield Symphony, and Bach Society of Dayton, and has sung roles such as Anna Gomez in The Consul and Sister Rose in Dead Man Walking with Dayton Opera. A regular guest on WDPR Discover Classical, Dr. Daniel-Cox earned degrees from Bowling Green State University (B.M.) and the University of Michigan (M.M., D.M.A.).

FEATURE: Myofascial Release: Expand Your Vocal Range (of Motion)
By: Claudia Friedlander

This column is Part 3 of a four-part series exploring myofascial release and its applications in the voice studio. Part 1 provided an introduction. Part 2 covered the role fascia plays in breath support. Part 4 will offer myofascial release exercises for the anatomy involved in resonance and articulation. This column explores the ways in which myofascial release exercises can improve range of motion and coordination for the anatomy involved in phonation.

Why I Can't Teach You How to Sing

All singers begin as self-taught. As with other movement and communication skills, we learn by exploring our bodies and imitating the comparatively more mature, experienced people around us. We respond to their feedback about whether the sounds we make are intelligible and pleasing. When our fledgling attempts at vocalizing are met with approval and encouragement, we are more likely to continue exploring our voices than when we are shushed up. Thus, the pleasure we take in these early explorations and the encouragement we receive from our listeners will factor more significantly into whether we are perceived as possessing "talent" than any inborn advantages our genetics might confer.

Voice teachers continually grapple with the widespread, persistent assumption that beautiful singing is the result of innate talent rather than a skill that can be developed. We may never succeed at persuading the world of the truth that most anyone can learn to sing. Unpacking the myth of innate talent nevertheless has the potential to make us better teachers, if we understand that among the qualities that define what we think of as innate talent is an absence of the physical tensions that commonly create resistance in the voice. Helping a singer to alleviate these tensions can reveal aptitude they never knew they possessed. Eliminating resistance can provide them with previously unavailable movement options and cause their voices to become more responsive and functional than weeks or years of vocalizing would be able to achieve were the resistance still present.

Vocal anatomy is much easier to coordinate when it is unencumbered by chronic physical tensions. If we regard these tensions as built-in features of a singer's vocal anatomy, the best we will be able to do is teach them how to compensate for them via a series of effortful tweaks that deplete their stamina. But when we can help a singer to alleviate tensions encroaching on their vocal anatomy, good coordination often seems to just fall into place, as though the innate talent that was there all along is suddenly revealed.

I would argue that throughout our lives, progress in singing depends primarily on focused self-study. A teacher or coach can recommend exercises, explain how everything works, and offer feedback and encouragement. But meaningful progress is the consequence of a singer's ability to notice the movements, sensations, and sounds involved in their own singing, and to intentionally evoke changes in the way their voice functions.

That is why I say that I can't teach you how to sing. What I *can* do is teach you how to teach yourself to sing. I can describe and demonstrate the anatomy and biomechanics involved. I can help you interpret the sensory and aural experiences you have while singing. I can encourage you to keep at it when things get confusing or frustrating. However, as I will explain in this column, expanding vocal range, resonance, and dynamic options requires *expanding range of motion for the components of vocal anatomy*. If I can teach you how to expand range of motion for the components of your vocal anatomy, *you* will figure out how to expand your vocal range, resonance, and dynamic options.

Ultimately, each singer has to figure these things out for themselves because all the movements involved in singing occur within their body. Only the singer can sense where range of motion is limited. Only the singer can

intuit where increasing range of motion will help them achieve their musical and expressive goals. A teacher or coach may be able to notice when things get stuck in a way that limits range, resonance, or stamina. They may even have some good ideas about where things are stuck and what needs to be released. But all they can really do is provide the singer with the tools they need to release whatever is stuck.

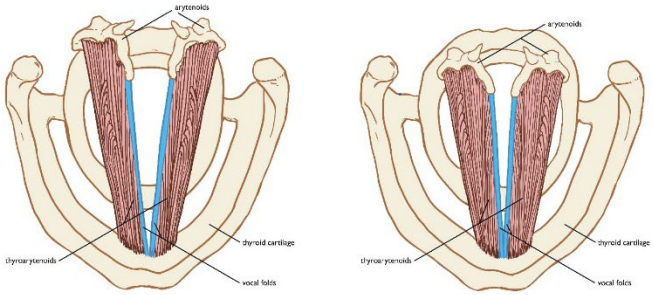
If a singer can't get their voice to move the way they want it to, we shouldn't assume it is for lack of talent—it is more likely the case that their voice just needs more room to move. Myofascial release strategies can provide just that.

A Larynx in a Vat

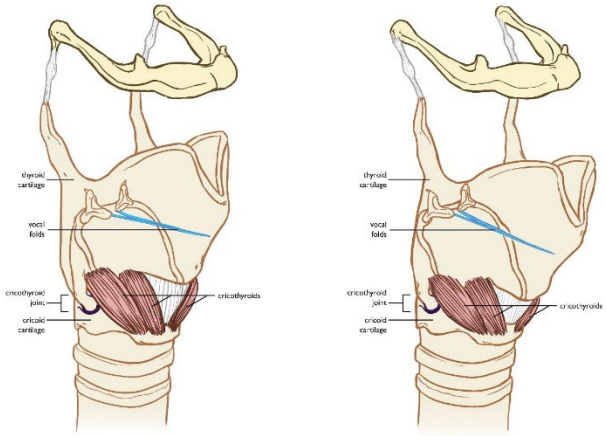
Students of philosophy eventually come across the "Brain in a Vat" thought experiment, which proposes that our embodied existence and experiences are merely illusions projected by a disembodied consciousness (see also *The Matrix* film franchise). I often think of the Brain in a Vat idea when contemplating laryngeal anatomy. It's fairly simple to explain how the cricothyroid and thyroarytenoid muscles partner to modulate pitch and registration of the vocal folds, and it would be fairly simple to learn the necessary coordination… *if what we were talking about were a Larynx in a Vat*.

If our vocal folds were housed within a larynx floating freely in a large vat rather than our throats, without any nearby structures to encroach on its movements, we could theoretically adjust vocal fold length, thickness, and degree of adduction quite easily.

The highest note available to a singer is determined by how long and thin their vocal folds can safely and comfortably be stretched. What limits this is not poor flexibility of the vocal folds, but rather the extent to which the laryngeal cartilages are able to flex at the cricothyroid joints. Similarly, the ability to modulate registration seamlessly between heavy and light production depends far less on skill at "mixing" than it does on laryngeal freedom of movement. While skill at registration is something most singers must cultivate, good range of motion for the larynx thus facilitates the development of this skill.



Action of the Thyroarytenoid Muscles
When the thyroarytenoids engage, they shorten, thicken, and adduct the vocal folds.



Action of the Cricothyroid Muscles
When the cricothyroids engage, they lengthen and narrow the vocal folds. The thyroarytenoids and cricothyroids partner to modulate length and thickness of the vocal folds, defining pitch and registration.

Illustrations created by Sandy Escobar and borrowed from Complete Vocal Fitness: A Singer's Guide to Physical Training, Anatomy, and Biomechanics, ©2018 Claudia Friedlander. Used by permission.

Here is an exercise to explore your own laryngeal range of motion. I encourage you to watch my video demonstration of this exercise and try it out prior to engaging in any of the myofascial release strategies that follow, in order to determine what type of myofascial release will be most useful for you.

- Stand or sit with comfortable alignment that permits full breathing.
- Take a full, well-coordinated inhalation.

- Release your breath and perform a siren that traverses your entire vocal range. Begin on a low pitch with heavy registration, siren up to the top of your range while gradually modulating to very light registration, then siren back down to the bottom while modulating to progressively heavier registration.
- Notice whether your registration modulates seamlessly from heavy to light and back again, or whether there are moments when the registration changes suddenly (i.e. “cracks” on the way up or “clunks” on the way down).
- Notice whether your breath releases continuously or whether you mobilize your abdominal or other muscles to increase or decrease airflow and breath pressure.
- Notice whether your throat feels uniformly relaxed/engaged throughout the exercise, or whether some parts of your range carry more tightness or effort than others.
- Notice what sensations signal to you that you have reached “the top” and know that it’s time to turn around.

As you perform the exercise, note any areas where you experience uneven registration, surging or discontinuity of breath release, or areas of throat tightness, as well as any corresponding movements elsewhere in your body or your breathing. This helps identify where myofascial release will prove the most beneficial.

Myofascial Release Exercises for Laryngeal Range of Motion

Here is a series of myofascial release (MFR) techniques that can help enhance laryngeal range of motion. When laryngeal range of motion is impeded, it is usually not caused by tension in the structures housed *within* the larynx, but rather by the tissues and structures located *outside* the larynx. Therefore, most of the techniques that follow are not aimed directly at freeing up the structures that comprise the larynx, but rather at freeing up the structures around, above, and below the larynx that can encroach on the space it needs to move freely.

MFR Around the Larynx: Constrictors and Cervical Spine (i.e. your neck): The muscles that surround and directly impact range of motion for the larynx include the *constrictors* and the *digastric muscles*. The constrictors are responsible for the wave of peristalsis involved in swallowing. The digastrics elevate the larynx, and their primary function also has to do with swallowing. Overactivity of either can limit range of motion for your larynx.

Assess: Stand or sit with your neck relaxed and well-aligned. Place one hand gently across the front of your throat and the other against the back of your neck where it meets the base of your skull. Swallow a few times, noting any movements and sensations in the front and back of your neck. Hum or vocalize, noting whether this seems to result in engagement of the tissues whose movements you noted while swallowing.

MFR for the Constrictors: Turn on a small massager and gently place it against the lamina of your thyroid cartilage without disturbing your neck alignment (either or both sides of your larynx will work fine). Swallow several times. MFR with external vibration is most effective when you hold the massager in one place while engaging and relaxing the muscles around it, so while it may feel good to move the massager around, I recommend holding it gently against your throat while slowly swallowing instead.

MFR for the Digastrics: Turn on a small massager and gently place it against your left or right suboccipital muscles without disturbing your neck alignment (I recommend performing this movement on both sides of your neck). Swallow, and see whether you detect movement where the massager is positioned. Perform an ascending and descending siren and see if you can allow this area to remain relaxed while the pitch ascends and descends. When the muscles that extend and flex your cervical spine become overactive, this can *also* limit laryngeal range of motion.

Assess: Stand or sit with your neck relaxed and well-aligned. Watch yourself in a mirror and/or gently place a hand on the back of your neck. Perform an ascending and descending scale or arpeggio that traverses a significant portion of your vocal range. Note whether your neck remains relaxed and well-aligned, or whether it moves in tandem with your pitch change (i.e. arches up and back when the pitch ascends).

MFR for the Cervical Spine: Turn on a small massager and gently place it against the side of your spine towards the top of your neck (either or both sides of your neck will work fine). Perform a slow, small nod “yes” at the position of the massager; then shake your head “no” side to side (again slowly) at the position where you feel the vibrations from the massager. Move the massager down one vertebra at a time and repeat the exercise until you reach the base of your neck.

MFR Above the Larynx: Hyoglossus and Supraglottal Tract: Most of the vocal anatomy with the potential to impede laryngeal range of motion from above are the structures involved in resonance and articulation, which will be covered more thoroughly in the final installation in this series of columns. However, the quantity of available resonance space and the quality of vowel definition are highly interactive with laryngeal range of motion, so I would like to introduce a couple of exercises to address these issues here. The hyoglossus is the muscle that retracts and depresses the tongue, so alleviating tension in the hyoglossus can have immediate payoff for improving laryngeal range of motion. Creating good resonance space within the supraglottal tract moves many of the tissues above the larynx farther away from it, which also facilitates improved laryngeal range of motion. This can be particularly helpful when working on modulating registration through a perceived “break” in the low middle voice, where it may be counterintuitive to create expansive resonance—a little extra room to move goes a long way for smoothing out registration in this part of the range.

Assess for Tongue Tension: Stand or sit with your neck relaxed and well-aligned. Gently press your thumb against the underside of your jaw between your chin and your neck and massage the area gently so that it feels soft and relaxed. With your thumb in that position, perform an ascending and descending siren that traverses your vocal range. Note whether that area stiffens and presses against your thumb. If it does, you’ve got an overactive hyoglossus.

MFR for the Hyoglossus: Turn on a small massager and gently place the tip where your thumb just was. Keeping your neck relaxed and well-aligned, *slowly* and repeatedly stick your tongue out all the way and then return it to a relaxed position. I find that many singers find it difficult or counterintuitive to perform this movement slowly—the slow, mindful movement of the tongue is key for releasing this characteristically overactive muscle.
Explore Potential Resonance Space: Make yourself yawn and give your supraglottal tract a good stretch, noting how expansive that space can potentially be. Begin on a high note where you are accustomed to creating expansive resonance space and perform a siren down to the bottom of your range, noting whether your registration is well-modulated or you experience a sudden registration event or “clunk” as you approach the bottom of your range. If you find it difficult to modulate your registration smoothly towards the bottom, perform the descending siren again while attempting to allow the expansive space you created for the onset to continue to feel expansive while the pitch descends. Note whether this improves your ability to modulate your registration more smoothly into your low notes.

MFR Below the Larynx: Shoulders and Sternum: Two large anatomical structures that directly have very little to do with phonation can indirectly have a lot to do with impeding laryngeal range of motion. When the shoulders unintentionally and unnecessarily ascend during inhalation, it compresses the neck and crowds the larynx. When the sternum unintentionally compresses during singing, it causes the shoulders to internally rotate and the neck to extend, crowding the larynx in other ways. Alleviating chronic tension in these large structures will help improve laryngeal range of motion, but it is also crucial for singers to retrain their shoulders, sternum, and any poor breath coordination that entangles them so that they are no longer tempted to either elevate their shoulders or depress their sternums while singing.

Assess: Stand or sit with your neck relaxed and well-aligned. While observing yourself in a mirror and/or inviting a friend to stand behind you with their hands on your shoulders, take some deep breaths while allowing your neck to remain relaxed and well-aligned. Do your shoulders elevate on inhalation? Now place a hand high on your chest, release your breath, and sustain a pitch within what you consider an easy range. Does your sternum remain where it is, or does it press downwards while you sustain?
MFR for the Upper Trapezius: Lie face-up in a prone position on a mat with your feet on the floor, knees pointing up, and a book or pillow under your head (if necessary for neck comfort). Place two small massage balls under

your upper trapezius on either side of your neck. Slowly press your heels into the floor and raise your hips up so that you are in a bridge position, then slowly rock back and forth and side to side over the massage balls and allow them to massage your upper traps. Because the upper trapezius is characteristically tight and overactive, you may find that just lying on top of the balls *without* bridging up is sufficient to feel some massage and release. Where myofascial release is concerned, it's important to engage in these exercises at a level of intensity that feels really good—it's counterproductive to push yourself to see how much you can tolerate.

MFR for the Chest Muscles: Here is a video demonstrating how to use a medium massage ball to release the main muscles that compress the sternum (for which it is difficult to provide a solid narrative description, so please watch the video). Stand close to a wall or pillar. Position the massage ball on your chest midway between your armpit and your sternum and lean forward so that your body weight pins the ball against the wall. Slowly shift your weight side to side and up and down, allowing the ball to massage your chest muscles.

Myofascial release will not on its own eliminate habitual elevation of the shoulders or compression of the sternum. Changing habitual movements requires time, patience, keen observation, and repetition. But these myofascial release strategies are very helpful for eliminating chronic tensions and raising awareness of habitual movements.

Alleviate Resistance Rather than Compensating for It

When we attempt to move our voices in a specific direction but hit a limit where we feel stuck, the most instinctive and expedient way to keep going is to apply sufficient force to override whatever resistance we are met with. For example, a singer trying to perform a high note that lies outside their comfortable laryngeal range of motion may still be able to reach that note by amping up their breath pressure.

Myofascial release techniques offer a highly desirable alternative to the way singers too often end up pushing and pulling on themselves in order to support their sound. Rather than amping up their breath pressure to override throat tightness, they can learn to release the tissues creating that tightness. Rather than holding the larynx in a low position, they can learn to release the structures responsible for elevating it.

It may require time and exploration to identify and alleviate tensions that can limit range of motion for the larynx. But while there is no single protocol that will achieve this for every singer, each has within them the ability to begin to notice where resistance is impeding the flow of their sound, and to alleviate that resistance at the source.

Our vocal anatomy is a *lot* easier to coordinate when it is free of resistance. The less internal resistance we encounter,the more freely our innate expressive talent can flow.

Claudia Friedlander is a voice teacher and fitness trainer based in New York City. Born in Queens and raised in New Jersey, she began her musical studies as a clarinetist. Her passion was fueled by her early experiences playing in the Young Artists Orchestra at Tanglewood under the batons of Seiji Ozawa and Leonard Bernstein. This led to private studies with Richard Stoltzman, a Master's degree in Clarinet from Peabody Conservatory, and a brief stint as the principal clarinetist of Orquesta Sinfónica del Estado de México. During her undergraduate studies at Bennington College, she was encouraged to study singing by longtime faculty member Frank Baker. She sang while continuing to play her instrument, earning a Master's degree in Voice at Peabody simultaneously with her clarinet degree. Eventually, her fascination with the physiological process of singing eclipsed her passion for clarinet. In 1995, she began doctoral studies in vocal performance and pedagogy at McGill University, which she completed in 1999. In 2002, Dr. Friedlander moved to New York City, apprenticed herself to renowned pedagogue W. Stephen Smith, and established her voice studio. In her first few years of teaching, frustration with her inability to address the mechanical dysfunction some of her students possessed in a methodical and rigorous way motivated her to study kinesiology. After receiving her certification as a personal trainer from the National Academy of Sports Medicine, she became inspired to apply the concept of sport-specific training to the professional voice. Dr. Friedlander has presented workshops on vocal fitness for The Voice Foundation and the Performing Arts Medicine Association, and was an invited panel discussant on health and wellness for OPERA America. Her students have performed on Broadway, and at leading opera houses including The Santa Fe Opera and the Metropolitan Opera. She is the author of the monthly column "Musings on Mechanics" for Classical Singer Magazine as well as a widely read and cited blog on vocal technique and fitness, The Liberated Voice. In 2008, she joined the faculty of the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall, where her most recent project was the development, in collaboration with Joyce DiDonato, of The Singer's Audition Handbook, an interactive online career development guide for young singers.

REPRINT: New York Singing Teachers' Association: Its Story

Pages 34 and 35 – Original Submitted by Dr Floyd S. Muckey and amended as follows, 1915-1916

Some Fundamental Principles of Voice Production

From the Standpoint of the Listener

I. Sound is a sensation produced through the organ of hearing by means of air-waves.

II. Pitch is that characteristic of the sensation of sound which depends upon the rate at which the air-waves strike the ear drum.

III. Volume is that characteristic of the sensation of sound which depends upon the extent of motion in the ear drum.

IV. Quality if that characteristic of the sensation of sound which depends upon the manner of motion in the ear drum.

From the Standpoint of the Producer

V. The voice is sound or air-waves. Vocal tone is always complex, being composed of several simple tones (Fundamental and over-tones), varying in pitch and intensity.

VI. Sound, airwave, or voice production necessitates the use of a mechanism which has three essential elements:

1. A vibrator, which s set in motion by impact of breath against the vocal chords (sic) and establishes the airwaves
2. A pitch mechanism to determine the rate at which the air-waves are originated.
3. A resonance mechanism to reinforce the airwaves established at the vibrator.

VII. In the voice mechanism the vocal chords serve as vibrator; the cartilages and muscles of the larynx form the pitch mechanism; and the cavities of the pharynx, mouth and nose, the resonance mechanism.

VIII. Pitch of the voice is determined by the length, weight, and tension of the vibrating portion of the vocal chords.

IX. Volume of the voice depends on the extent of vibration of the vocal chords which is caused by breath pressure, and upon resonance.

X. Quality of the voice depends upon the vibration of the vocal chords as a whole and in segments, and upon resonance.

XI. Vocal resonance, which is an important factor in voice production, is due to the sympathetic vibration of the air in the resonance cavities.

XII. Correct voice production, or that action of the mechanism which produces perfect vocal tone, includes free vibration of the vocal chords, the free motion of the cartilages and muscles of the larynx, and the full use of resonance space. This action, under the influence of properly controlled breath, produces the voice for which Nature intended this particular mechanism.

XIII. Any muscular contraction which prevents the free vibration of the vocal chords, the free motion of the cartilages and muscles of the larynx, and the full use of the resonance space, is termed an interference.

XIV. Every or of interference leaves its impress on the quality of the tone.

XV. The vocal muscles are involuntary in their true action for voice production. The interfering muscles are subject to voluntary control. Correct action of the voice mechanism must be induced, not forced. Interference, being under control of the will, can be eliminated. Every form of interference by undue tension of the false vocal chords, or soft palate, or muscles of the chin and tongue, etc., leaves its impress on the quality of the tone.

XVI. The art of voice production is based upon the facts of anatomy, physiology, and physics. The facts apply to every voice mechanism with equal force and in precisely the same way, and are therefore impersonal.

XVII. The art of singing is composed of four elements: Breathing, Tone Production, Diction, and Interpretation.

From the New York Times, March 1, 1930: Dr. Floyd Summer Muckey of 25 West Ninety-fourth Street, a specialist in diseases of the nose and throat who devoted the last forty years of his life to a study of the science of voice production, died suddenly last night of a stroke of apoplexy while seated in his home listening to a woman pupil singing Handel's "Oh, Sleep." He had also suffered a stroke two years ago. He had been virtually blind since a cerebral hemorrhage in 1926. He was 72 years old. A widow, son and daughter survive.

Dr. Muckey is chiefly known for the researches that he carried on from 1893 until 1913 with the late Professor William Hallock of Columbia, during which Professor Hallock contributed the knowledge of physics, Dr. Muckey that of anatomy and physiology. In the sketch of Dr. Muckey in "Who's Who" he is credited with having been the first to give a working analysis of tone, to photograph a manometric flame and to make a demonstrating photograph of vocal chords in action. For years he lectured on voice production at the Post-Graduate Medical School.

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