



The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



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We meet at 7:00 most Thursdays at Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran, 7860 Southside Blvd, Jacksonville, FL
Guests always welcome Call 355-SING No Experience Necessary

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SINGING VALENTINES

While final numbers are still coming in, this year was another success for Singing Valentines. We delivered 71 live performances and 10 virtual performances (video recorded for remote email delivery). Gross (around \$6k) and net (almost \$5k) income for the chapter is still being calculated. A few representative photos are shown:



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MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



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The Orange Spiel is published monthly and is the official publication of the Jacksonville Big O Chapter of the Sunshine District of the Barbershop Harmony Society, the home of the Big Orange Chorus. The chapter and chorus meet most Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm at the Shepherd of the Woods, 7860 Southside Blvd. For more information visit our website, <http://www.bigorangechorus.com>. Articles, pictures and address corrections may be sent to the editor.

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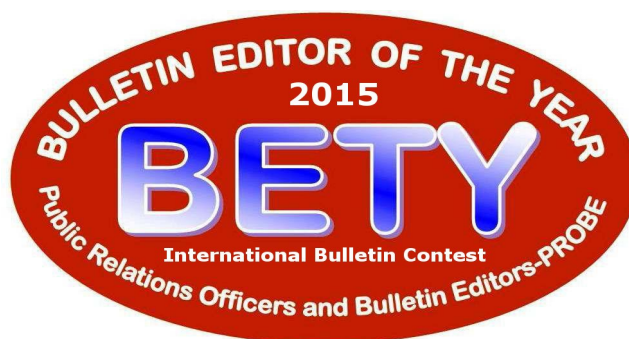
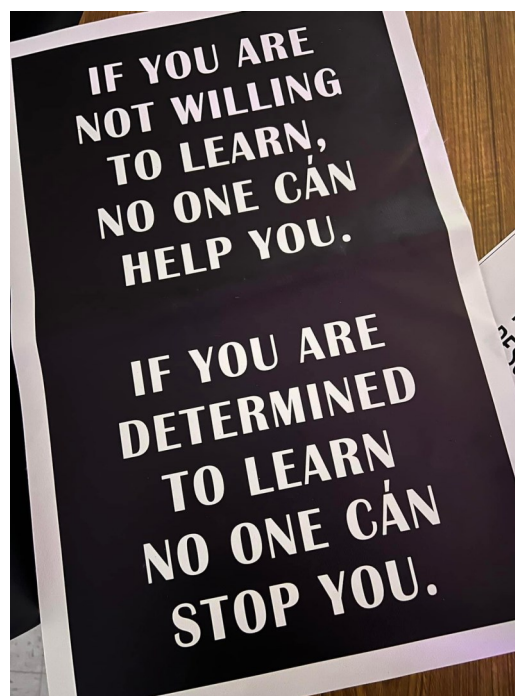
EDITORIAL

It's been a great start to the new year. We've had lots of new guests who are continuing to sing with us. Gigs and competition are coming. We are moving ahead, sounding good, and ready to move up to bigger and better things. Come join us!

Let's see if we can get more people interested in coming to our rehearsals. Ask anyone you know who likes to sing. Invite friends, acquaintances, and even strangers. Singing is fun. Singing well is even better. Performing in public shares that fun with lots of people. Everybody wins.

We have some positions (both board and committee) that need filling. If you can help, as a leader or a helper, please see Mike.

Each and every singer, improving just a little, each and every day, will result in huge advances for the chorus.



SINGING VALENTINES
(continued)



PRACTICE AND REHEARSAL ARE NOT THE SAME THING

by Dr. Jay Dougherty
from Harmonizer

When it comes to chorus singing, it is important to understand the difference between practice and rehearsal. While many singers use these terms interchangeably, they refer to two distinct activities. Practice involves individual work at home, where singers focus on learning their music, figuring out complex rhythms, ensuring note accuracy, memorizing their part, and ingraining muscle memory for good vocal production. Rehearsal, on the other hand, involves the full ensemble coming together to find part balance, improve intonation, fine-tune the timing of swipes and embellishments, and make the music come alive with emotional connection, musical nuance, and sympathetic resonance.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PRACTICE BUT DO NOT REHEARSE

As a director by trade, I have countless times heard singers say things like, "I can't be at rehearsal next week, but I'll practice at home." While I admire their commitment to at-home study, practicing simply does not make up for missed rehearsal. If it did, then we would just say, "Here's the music and the learning tracks; See you at the show!" Ponder that for a moment and you'll agree that home practice just isn't enough. Yes, we absolutely should be practicing at home, but we should not pretend that it exempts us from attending rehearsals, or somehow makes up for missing them.

It is important to understand that your absence at rehearsal is not just about you. Singers often think that it's really no big deal if they miss rehearsal. Who would even notice? They'll just practice at home and all is well, right? Unfortunately, the answer is no. This line of thinking does not consider how the singer's absence affects the rest of the chorus. How can a rehearsal be successful if people are missing? How would those present be able to balance the chords properly or lock into the full resonant sound that would otherwise be present?

When singers miss rehearsals, they also miss out on the opportunity to connect with their fellow chorus

members, build relationships, and create a cohesive sound. Singing in a chorus is not just about hitting the right notes; it's about creating something together, something that is greater than the sum of its parts.

When you miss rehearsals, you miss out on that experience, and those that do show up miss out on what could have been if you had been there. When everyone is present and engaged, the energy in the room is palpable, and the music comes alive in a way that is impossible to replicate through individual practice alone.

Practice is where the grunt work is done, and where the building blocks are established. Rehearsal is where the magic happens, where singers can learn from each other, and where they can create something truly special.

Of course, life happens, and there will be weeks when singers have to miss rehearsal. We all understand that. However, it is important to think twice before pretending that extra practice at home will make up for that missed rehearsal. Be aware that you are a vital part of your choir's sound and success. It's easy to feel unimportant in a chorus setting because you're just "one of many," and it's easy to think that no one will miss you if you're not there. This simply isn't true. Your chorus needs you. In fact,

they completely depend on you.

When everyone is present, we can work on things like resonance, musicality, delivery, balance, performance techniques and intonation among others. When people have to miss, even with good reason, it slows us down, and we have to spend time catching them up when they return. The improvement process is much slower as a result.

CONCLUSION

No one joins a chorus with the intent to miss as many rehearsals as possible. We all lead busy lives and 100% rehearsal attendance is simply not possible for most of us. However, if we truly understand how our presence impacts others and how our absence can be a detriment to progress, then perhaps we'll make an extra effort to prioritize our other responsibilities to what extent we can for the betterment of the whole. Yes, practice at home. But practice does not count as rehearsal. And rehearsal isn't

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PRACTICE AND REHEARSAL (continued)

(Continued from page 4)

the place for practice either.

Now let's get out there and make the world a better place through music.

Why rehearsal attendance is of paramount importance

Accountability

By attending rehearsals, you are holding yourself accountable to the group and committing to the process of making music together. This helps to ensure that everyone is on the same page and working toward the same goal.

Timing

One of the most important aspects of chorus singing is timing. When you rehearse with the full ensemble, you are able to fine-tune the timing of the music, ensuring that everyone is singing together and creating a cohesive sound.

Feedback

Rehearsals provide an opportunity for feedback from your director and fellow singers. You can receive guidance on how to improve your singing technique and musical interpretation of the music. By missing rehearsals, you are depriving yourself of this valuable feedback and the ensemble will not improve as quickly as it could otherwise.

Intonation

This refers to the accuracy of the pitches being sung. By rehearsing with the full ensemble, you are able to hear how your part fits in with the other parts, and make adjustments as needed to ensure that the chords are in tune.

Musical and performance elements

By rehearsing with the full ensemble, you are able to practice changes in musical elements such as dynamics and interpretive choices,

and you learn how to work with others to ensure that the music has the appropriate emotional impact as a result.

Inspiration

Being part of a chorus can be a source of inspiration and motivation. Hearing the other singers around you and feeling the power of the music can be incredibly uplifting and energizing. By attending rehearsals, you are opening yourself up to these positive experiences and opportunities for growth. In addition, you are providing those opportunities for others around you as well.

Yogi Berra Explains Jazz:

Interviewer: Can you explain jazz?

Yogi: I can't, but I will. 90% of all jazz is half improvisation. The other half is the part people play while others are playing something they never played with anyone who played that part. So if you play the wrong part, it's right. If you play the right part, it might be right if you play it wrong enough. But if you play it too right, it's wrong.

Interviewer: I don't understand.

Yogi: Anyone who understands jazz knows that you can't understand it. It's too complicated. That's what's so simple about it.

Interviewer: Do you understand it?

Yogi: No. That's why I can explain it. If I understood it, I wouldn't know anything about it.

Interviewer: Are there any great jazz players alive today?

Yogi: No. All the great jazz players alive today are dead. Except for the ones that are still alive. But so many of them are dead, that the ones that are still alive are dying to be like the ones that are dead. Some would kill for it.

Interviewer: What is syncopation?

Yogi: That's when the note that you should hear now happens either before or after you hear it. In jazz, you don't hear notes when they happen because that would be some other type of music. Other types of music can be jazz, but only if they're the same as something different from those other kinds.

Interviewer: Now I really don't understand.

Yogi: I haven't taught you enough for you to not understand jazz that well.

THEO HICKS ON PRACTICAL AESTHETICS

by Liz Garnett
from helpingyouharmonise.com

The final plenary session at January's LABBS/BABS Directors Weekend was led by Theo Hicks on the topic, 'Philosophies of Musical Enjoyment: Listening for the Singers' Joy'. It produced lots of things I wanted to reflect on, and because I kept getting them tangled up I have been procrastinating trying to organise my notes. But a recent conversation with another director who wasn't there had me wanting to refer to it and so it's time to try and untangle the thoughts to render them shareable.

The first thing to note the effect that having that title on the schedule had on the weekend's overall agenda. It put the word 'joy' into our common lexicon in all kinds of contexts before any of us know exactly what Theo was going to talk about.

I found the session itself fascinating as it brought different parts of my life together in ways I hadn't anticipated. It started by outlining four schools of thought about musical value that Theo had learned about during his graduate studies – Absolutism, Formalism, Referentialism, and Expressionism – and then explored ways to use an awareness of these different frameworks to help singers have a more satisfying musical experience.

There are two dimensions to this session I'd like to reflect on: how Theo presented the aesthetic theories, and then how he applied them. He summarised each of the four positions as follows:

1. **Absolutism:** finding intrinsic value in the musical sounds
2. **Formalism:** finding value in understanding the musical structures
3. **Referentialism:** finding value in how music refers outside itself
4. **Expressionism:** finding value in how music creates human connection

In a scholarly context I think one might cavil a bit with this characterisation of absolute music, which is usually regarded in more metaphysical terms, but for the practical purposes he developed through the session, this defines a useful category.

The first thing that struck me was how Theo framed these discourses as theories of *enjoyment*. I spent a good deal of time reading musical aesthetics (albeit

mostly in extracts and in translation), both for my PhD and in teaching the subject at both undergraduate and masters level, and Theo's title made me realise in retrospect how much of this writing is relatively joyless. It is written by people who clearly care deeply about music and the arts, but often takes them (and themselves) so seriously there isn't a lot of room for pleasure. Indeed, often the goal seems to be elevate music above the level of mere pleasure, to establish it as something altogether more worthy and significant.

The second striking thing, in the context of the aesthetic literature, is how Theo presented these ideas as simultaneously in operation, and as such, with equal claims to validity. Of course, they are all culturally available to us, otherwise he wouldn't have met them in a course on Musical Philosophies, but in the literature, they rarely sit comfortably side by side. Rather, each typically makes its claims to validity by critiquing the others. In the 19th century, the debate centred more on which *kinds* of music were of higher value, in the 20th, the debate developed more into which theory better explained what music does and/or should do.

But it was by presenting the ideas as co-existent rather than competing that Theo could turn them to practical use in a rehearsal context. He did this by positing that everyone tends to have their preferred mode(s) of musical engagement, rather like learning styles, only in terms of aesthetics. (And, yes, I know the concept of learning styles has been critiqued, but as I argue here there are still ways in which it can prove useful.)

Theo posited that the dominant mode of aesthetic engagement in barbershop is referential, placing story-telling at the heart of the performance. But for someone, such as one of his quartet-mates, for whom sonic beauty provides the most direct and meaningful musical experience, a focus on story-telling is really hard work. They end up singing with their thinky face on all the time as they try and concentrate on the story. Let them connect with the music in their preferred way, however, and you suddenly see all their intuitive expressiveness come to life.

Theo worked through this idea by having the demo chorus for this session, The Belles of Three Spires, sing through a passage, each time focusing on a different mode of musical value: sound quality, musical construction, story-telling, and human connection, respectively. Then he asked them to sing it with each individual choosing to focus on the one that they connected with most readily. And you know

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THEO HICKS ON PRACTICAL AESTHETICS (continued)

(Continued from page 6)

what? The whole was significantly more expressive than it was in any of the previous iterations.

One might worry of course that having everybody choose their preferred mode of aesthetic engagement might produce a miscellaneous expressive effect. But everyone was still singing the same piece of music, with a shared understanding. In the rehearsal process we touch on all these elements, after all: we refine the tone, we explore the musical structure, we develop an understanding of the narrative, and we think about how to connect with listeners. And we expect all these elements to cohere into a unified whole, in which the harmonic, melodic, rhythmic, and sonic features combine in ways that tell the same story. So long as we are singing within this shared understanding, it doesn't really matter which route we are taking into it, and having everyone choose the one that makes most sense to them makes it not only easier but also more pleasurable.

I mentioned at the start of my recent post on Theo Hicks's session on Philosophies of Musical Enjoyment that I had been spurred into getting it written and posted by a conversation with a director who hadn't been there, but might, I hypothesised, find the ideas useful. That post got too long to move onto how he might do so, so I'm coming back to address his particular circumstance separately.

The particular challenge he was facing was working on a song with his chorus that is particularly poignant, and might touch some of his singers a bit too closely for comfort as it referenced in its later stages themes of bereavement and loss. Indeed, he found it quite personally challenging himself even without specific recent life events that might be even more triggering.

Obviously, I pointed him towards my post from last year that address this question directly. But after hearing Theo's session, it occurred to me to wonder whether the different modes of musical engagement he discussed might give a more purposeful and strategic way to manage this.

If the lyrics of a song are such that they readily bring people to tears, it may well be that it is emotionally less harrowing for everyone to tread lightly on the story-telling theme during rehearsal. Deliberately

putting one's focus onto melodic flow, harmonic colour, tone quality, and the architecture of form – as in the formalist and absolutist modes of aesthetic value – will allow the ensemble to develop a shared musical understanding through the discovery of much beauty and colour without deliberately rubbing salt into emotional wounds.

In a barbershop context, of course, it will probably seem counter-intuitive not to place the meaning of the lyrics at the heart of what you do. But, as anyone who has ever listened to instrumental music or sung in a foreign language will know, what the words could say without the music is only a tiny fraction of music's communicative power. It is actually a really useful exercise, even without the dangers of emotional triggers, to approach a song with the aim to make a meaningful experience for those who don't understand the words.

(I have spent a while fruitlessly trying to find a post I thought I had written some years back critiquing the centrality of story-telling on these kinds of grounds, but either I never actually wrote it or my search skills are inadequate to unearth it. Either possibility is plausible.)

Of course, at some point as you near performance you are going to have to re-engage with the content of the lyrics. And you will probably find that they are all the more powerful for being relatively fresher in everyone's attention, allowing a more touching and expressive performance in the absence of the semantic depletion that comes with intensive rehearsal.

This moment is likely to be the most hazardous for the emotional wellbeing of singers, and will need approaching with some care. But by this stage you will have built everyone an emotional escape-lane. So you can go into this saying: if you feel the lyrics at any point are going to touch you too deeply for your wellbeing, please switch back into one of the purely musical modes we have been working on.

This feels to me not only a more supportive way of helping people cope than leaving them to think up their own distraction techniques (as mentioned in my post linked in paragraph 3, above), but also does more to protect the expressive integrity of the whole. Singers who need to mentally detach from narrative content too close to home can still participate in the shared harmonic and melodic arc of the song, in ways that remain expressively coherent even if more abstract.

MIXED VOICE: 5 EASY EXERCISES TO FIND IT AND GROW IT

by Matt Ramsey
from ramseyvoice.com

If you're a singer, you've probably heard of a strange and mythical beast called the **mixed voice**.

Mixed voice is a powerful yet often misunderstood tool in the singer's toolbox.

Today, we'll go over the basics of mix voice singing, look at some common misconceptions surrounding it, and discuss how you can achieve it in your singing.

Then we'll work through 5 daily mixed voice vocal exercises for singers to help you develop your own mixed voice.

Once you understand and master mixed voice, you'll unlock a whole new world of untapped singing potential.

If you've been scouring the internet wondering how to find mixed voice and how to get a strong mixed voice, you've come to the right place!

What is Mixed Voice?

Before we jump in, let's look at a definition of what mixed voice actually means...

Mixed voice is when you combine your head voice and chest voice to create an even singing tone from the bottom to the top of your voice.

But don't worry...

No matter where you are right now, you can smoothly sing through your whole vocal range.

That means no vocal break or strains when you sing.

And to listeners, mixed voice sounds like one single voice.

What's So Great About Mixed Voice?

With that out of the way, what does mixed voice mean for you as a singer?

Mixed voice is the richest, strongest, and most

controlled sound the human voice can produce.

When done right, it generates a beautiful and even vocal tone across your entire vocal range.

With mixed voice, singers can bridge the gap between high and low registers known as chest voice and head voice. The mixed voice range spans the gamut from high to low notes.

If a song requires that you hit high notes with power, mixed voice is the way to go.

To understand mixed voice and its placement in the singer's toolbox, let's look at its two main ingredients: **chest voice and head voice**.

Chest and Head Voice: Pros and Cons

Head Voice

First off, the term "head voice" is a bit misleading. No matter how you sing, all sounds come from your vocal cords in your throat, not your head.

However, when you hit those really high notes, it sure does *feel* like the sound is ringing straight out of your own head!

Head voice is soft and tender, yet full and strong.

Imagine a strong, silent-type hero or heroine from a movie: quiet and reserved, but with unmistakable inner strength.

Head voice is ideal for R&B, soul, and indie rock where you want to hit those high notes while maintaining a full and rich tone.

Head voice is absolutely required to expand your vocal range since all your high notes come from head voice.

However, head voice is **not** the same thing as falsetto.

Think of head voice vs. falsetto like this: falsetto sounds breathy, airy, and somewhat hollow, while head voice retains much more tonal depth.

Chest Voice

Chest voice is the vocal register we normally use when speaking.

It uses your larger, thicker vocal cords.

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MIXED VOICE: 5 EASY EXERCISES (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

To sing in your chest voice, put your hand on your chest, and you'll feel a vibration in your upper torso.

Chest voice is low, thick, strong, and warm.

Chest voice is responsible for singing with power.

It's also great for belting out a blues romp or a powering through a grungy rock song.

(A lot of people ask me about mixed voice vs. belting. See my article on belting for more on that!)

However, the vocal range of chest voice is pretty limited.

If you try to 'push up' your chest voice to higher notes, they will sound flat and strained.

A similar straining occurs when fret high notes on the lower strings of a guitar.

You can play high notes on the 15th fret of the low E string if you want, but they will sound flat, and lose a lot of tone.

Mixed Voice: The Best of Both Worlds!

Mixed voice combines the beautiful highs of head voice with the deep and strong lows of chest voice.

It lets you access your entire vocal range at its full power, tone and richness.

Learn to sing consistently in mixed voice, and you'll have the freedom to switch to other voices whenever you see fit.

With mixed voice, you can be a vocal chef!

Sprinkle in some chest voice here, a pinch of falsetto there, and stay in total control of your singing at all times.

Mixed voice is, in short, the ultimate way of learning how to sing flawlessly.

What is Mixed Voice, *Really*?

Some Common Misconceptions

How do you get a mixed voice, actually? Let's clear up some common misconceptions about the meaning and definition of mix voice.

Most teachers present mixed voice as just that: mixing head and chest voices into a single sound.

For most practical intents and purposes, that's a fine mixed voice definition.

However, this is a bit of an oversimplification.

Chest and head voice both use different vibration patterns in the vocal cords.

That's why you can't sing with both low and high cords at the same time.

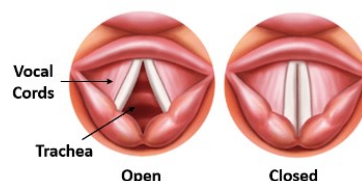
So in order to truly understand the meaning of mixed voice, we have to talk about the vocal cords...

A Word on the Vocal Cords

Vocal cords, also called vocal folds, work by opening and closing in quick succession.

By letting puffs of air through your throat at certain rates, they generate different pitches of sound.

Humans have two 'true' vocal cords.



These are the vocal cords that are responsible for most singing.

In case you're curious, we also have **two 'false' vocal cords**.

These are technically vestibular folds located just above the true cords.

You might think that false cords would be used in falsetto singing, but this is not the case.

Actually, false cords make a deep, sonorous, and guttural tone that you hear in vocal fry.

They're best used in screaming vocal styles like death metal, or in movies when actors are portraying an evil villain or gritty anti-hero.

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MIXED VOICE: 5 EASY EXERCISES (continued)

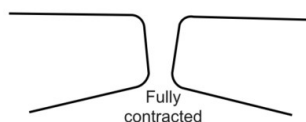
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But here's what you need to know about the "true" vocal cords:

When the vocal cords are thick, they vibrate slower, producing chest voice.

Here's what that looks like:

Pressed or
"Pushing"
(Shorteners
dominant)



When the vocal cords are thinner, they vibrate faster, producing head voice.

And here's what the thin vocal cords look like:

Falsetto
(Stretchers only)



Can Vocal Cords Be Mixed?

Almost all singing is done with just the two true vocal cords.

Here's the thing though:

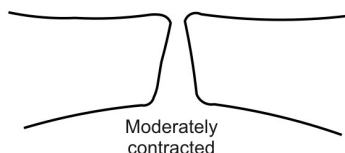
Most scientific studies have concluded that, at a certain point, everybody switches between thick cords and the thin cords.

There is no middle ground where both thick and thin cords are opening and closing at once.

However, you can have a moderate amount of cord thickness from the bottom to top.

That's mixed voice!

Mixed
(Stretchers &
Shorteners)



But the idea that you can actually mix chest and head voice together in the way that painters might

mix pigments to form a new color ain't true.

Smoothing Out Vocal Breaks

So, if I can't literally mix voices or vocal cords, how do I know if I'm using mixed voice? Is just switching between chest voice and head voice the same as mixed voice singing?

Great questions!

Mixed voice is all about a **seamless transition** from thick to thin vocal cord, from chest to head voice.

There should be no audible break between them.

So what's the secret?

Well, if you keep your vocal cords opening and closing evenly from the bottom to the top of your voice you'll achieve a full, rich, and continuous tone across your entire range.

You may still notice a slight break when you make the switch from your chest to your head voice.

But listeners will perceive your singing as continuous and seamless, as if your head and chest voices were literally 'mixed' together.

The key is to switch between head and chest voices such that **only you** know where the break is.

After all, if a tree falls in a forest and no one hears it, did it really break between its head and chest voices?

Like Driving a Car

For example, think of singing in mixed voice like driving a stick-shift car.

Whenever you shift gears, you might feel a slight jolt or clunk as the new gear slides into place.

But people standing on the sidewalk just see a car gradually speeding up or slowing down.

If you're really good a driving stick, even the passengers may not notice the transition.

The same principle applies to the singing voice. You may always *feel* the shift between chest and head, but if no one hears it, it sounds like one voice.

Five Fantastic Mix Voice Exercises

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MIXED VOICE: 5 EASY EXERCISES
(continued)

(Continued from page 10)

Now that we understand what mixed voice really is, we can start practicing and perfecting it.

These exercises are designed to help your vocal cords stay together and reduce the break between chest voice and head voice.

The goal is to make mixed voice a strong and reliable part of your singing repertoire.

But First: The 1.5-Octave Scale

Before diving into mixed voice examples and exercises, let's look at the 1.5-octave scale.

This scale covers an octave and a half of range in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. You sing four triplet arpeggios: the first two going up; the next two going down and ending on the tonic.

Like this!

Tri-pl-et, tri-pl-et, tri-pl-et, tri-pl-et, done...

The 1.5-octave scale in C would be:



In the video, I start by demonstrating a 1.5-octave scale in B flat.

The point of the 1.5-octave scale is to access all the highs and lows of your singing voice.

Remember, we're looking for a smooth transition from chest to head voice.

Don't push your chest voice up to the top notes, and don't do a 'flip' where you completely disconnect from the top part of your voice.

Keep it even.

Switch but don't flip.

We'll try singing the 1.5-octave scale with a variety of vowels and consonant sounds to practice smooth vocal transition in different ways.

Now, let's get into the exercises!

1. The Lip Trill

In this mixed voice exercise, take two fingers on each hand, press them against the middle of your cheeks, and flop your lips together as you sing.

The resulting sound will remind you of a motorboat chugging down a stream.

Now sing the 1.5-octave scale while doing a lip trill!

As always, keep all your notes even and strong.

Here's a video where I walk you through the lip trill exercise: <https://youtu.be/Sqjvl35YeZk>

2. The "Gee"

The next of our mixed voice exercises is a little number I like to call the "gee."

That's "gee" as in "geese" without the "s."

This one is great for establishing a smooth and even closure of vocal cords across your entire range.

The "e" vowel allows you to reach your head voice while the "g" consonant keeps your vocal cords opening and closing with every note of the scale.

The "gee" is a way to reach high notes without straining while allowing for smooth closure of all your vocal cords.

Remember, don't push and don't flip.

Don't push your chest voice too high, and don't suddenly flip from chest to head or from head to falsetto.

Here's a great video to show you how to do the "Gee": <https://youtu.be/aVVEqKKoDfA>

3. The Bratty "Nay"

If you've made it this far, awesome job!

The next exercise will build even more vocal cord closure.

To do the "nay", pretend that you're a bratty little kid who is sure that no one can catch him at tag.

You might also imagine a cackling, crooked-nosed witch about to cast a hex on an unsuspecting victim.

(Continued on page 12)

MIXED VOICE: 5 EASY EXERCISES
(continued)

(Continued from page 11)

Like the “gee”, the “nay” helps connect low and high notes while forcing the vocal cords to close consistently.

As always, here’s a great video to walk you through this exercise: <https://youtu.be/YXuNXWx86v4>

4. The “Nae”

If you’re having trouble smoothing all the breaks and flips out of your singing, this exercise is for you.

The “nae” is like a very bratty and sassy way of saying “nasty.”

This exercise uses an open vowel and will help you belt better.

It builds in a bit more power and solidity into your top notes.

The “nae” also reduces the break when you switch from thin to thick vocal cords.
<https://youtu.be/oaj4avF2nMk>

5. The “Gug”

This last exercise uses another sound to help your vocal cords stay together.

The “gug” is just the word “gut” but with a “g” at the end.

Whereas the “gee” from exercise 2 carries you into your head voice and reduces the risk of straining, the “gug” is more of chest-based sound.

The “gug” is great for perfecting your shift from chest to head voice.

It allows for a natural and balanced tone.

With this exercise, you can control your chest voice and allow your head voice to come in quickly and effortlessly.

Concluding Thoughts

Congratulations!

If you’ve been following these exercises, you’re already well on your way to mastering mixed voice.

But if you are still experiencing some breaks or

strain, or still wondering how to know if you’re singing in mixed voice, don’t worry!

Everyone feels a switch when transitioning from their chest to their head voice.

The trick is to make sure no one else hears it.

Record Yourself

“How do I know if I’m using mixed voice correctly?” you may still be wondering? Try recording yourself!

Recording and listening to yourself is a great way to iron out the last few kinks in your mixed voice technique.

It lets you step outside of your own head and hear your voice from the audience’s perspective.

Try recording yourself singing these exercises and make a note about where you thought you switched between chest and head voice.

Then play back the recording and check for two things.

First: did you hear any break?

Second: if you did, do you think you would have noticed it if you weren’t looking for it?

If you heard no break at all, fantastic!

If you heard a very small break, that’s still an impressive achievement.

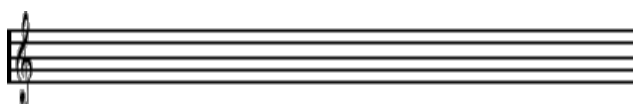
The Road Ahead

Thanks again for reading! I truly hope these exercises for mixed voice help you learn how to sing in mixed voice with confidence and grace.

How long does it take to develop mixed voice? Well, like most good things, mixed voice will not come to you overnight.

It can be challenging at times and requires regular daily practice to master.

But before long, you’ll be singing in a beautiful and strong mixed voice without any breaks, flips, pushing, or strain.



STEVEN TENENBOM: ON RHYTHM, PHRASING, AND THE LIFE WITHIN EACH NOTE

by Dr Noa Kageyama
from bulletproofmusician.com

I remember having a lesson one summer, when my teacher, Paul Kantor, said something that sort of made sense in the moment, but also puzzled my confused teenage brain. (I suspect the puzzlement is why I still remember that moment to this day.)

The gist of what I remember him saying, is that the notes printed on the page are an imperfect representation of the music that the composer had in mind. And that so many of the details and nuances and the stuff that makes music music, isn't captured by the lines and dots on the page that we use to represent sound and pitches.

It don't think I really understood what he meant by this until some years later. But once it finally clicked, practicing, playing, and performing became a vastly richer and funner experience. Indirectly, I think this understanding helped me feel less nervous on stage as well, because of the level of engagement and focus that it required.

How so?

More than meets the eye

Well, among other things, understanding that there's a lot more to music than what you see on the page was part of a transition from approaching music as an athletic event in which technical perfection was the goal, to approaching it as something centered more around communicating emotions. Much like that Maya Angelou quote – "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Practically speaking, this meant appreciating that notes didn't just have a beginning and an end, but a really important middle as well. Which led me to begin putting way more thought into the life within each note, as well as the connections between them.

Umm...but what does that actually mean?

Yeah, this can seem kind of abstract, so I thought I'd reach out to someone who played a role in nudging me down this path of understanding, and ask if he might be able to elaborate on this concept

a bit!

Meet Steven Tenenbom

Violist Steven Tenenbom has had a varied and distinguished career as a chamber musician, soloist, recitalist and teacher. A member of the Orion String Quartet and Opus One, he has also toured and recorded with Tashi, the Galimir String Quartet, and Musicians from Marlboro, and has worked with composer Lukas Foss and jazz artists Chick Corea and Wynton Marsalis.

Steven serves on the faculties of the Curtis Institute of Music, the Juilliard School, Mannes College of Music, and Bard College Conservatory of Music. He and his wife, violinist Ida Kavafian, also breed, raise, and show champion Vizsla purebred dogs!

In today's episode, we'll explore...

- 2:02 – How Steven first encountered the viola and what drew him to the viola over other instruments.
- 6:44 – What does it mean to subdivide for phrasing, rather than just for rhythm?
- 13:20 – What does it mean for each note to create the following note?
- 17:14 – How Michael Tree described what a phrase was to Steven – and a live illustration of the examples he shared up to this point.
- 22:02 – Does all of this require having a clear concept of what you want to do with each phrase?
- 25:37 – A tool Steven picked up from Karen Tuttle, that he uses with his students to this day.
- 26:19 – How valuable is it to have a hobby or a new skill that you have to work at? And why?
- 30:53 – What has he learned from breeding and showing dogs?
- 34:50 – Why we should all have a practice buddy – no matter how advanced or experienced we are!

(Editor's Note, the video is only directly viewable on his website, but there is a podcast audio at <https://poddtoppen.se/podcast/1402378177/the-bulletproof-musician/steven-tenenbom-on-rhythm-phrasing-and-the-life-within-each-note>) (I will include a few excerpts from the transcript below)

I remember something with Leon Fleisher in a similar, but not exactly that piece, but, uh, some, group maybe at Carnegie Hall was playing, the C

(Continued on page 14)

STEVEN TENENBOM: ON RHYTHM
(continued)

(Continued from page 13)

minor Brahms piano quartet, Opus 60. And of course, there's that beautiful slow movement with it starts with a cello solo. And he had the cellist do the same thing where he said, uh, take the smallest value, in that music that you're playing, which in that case was a 16th note, and then play or sing the phrase playing with all 16th notes. And I guess the point he was getting at is that the change of sound on long notes would be best illustrated if you actually heard the subdivisions in it.

And I think when you, uh, become more sensitive to that, you don't have to play separate notes. But I have, quite often have students do that. I even sometimes play tremolo in demonstrating something in terms of phrasing and sound. And I know, we're probably talking about a rhythmic thing as well, but in terms of phrasing longer notes are actually made up of many small pieces and I think it was, uh, György Sebők from Indiana that said, if you want to play louder, you must hear more.

He also said long notes are long because they have to be, I mean, a long note needs more time in order to affect change. And, we change the sound because we're changing the emotional content of the music.

I mean, I could get very detailed on it, but music is basically living in an emotional state, but it's not living in an emotional state. It's living in changing emotional states. So things are constantly in flux and I think when we grow up, we were told to count and hold a long note a certain amount of time, but we're not really taught that if we change the sound or the feeling of that note, then we actually can count better.

And that probably gets to the counting part, because if you, line up and you coordinate with the change of sound on a note, whether it being softening, intensifying, changing color, all those things, then you're in tune with the subdivisions, and then your rhythm becomes quite naturally attached to the musical effect that you're trying to make.

So, I remember hearing those things, and you know, of course, we always have these statements that people make that maybe don't mean as much at the time, but mean more later, as you just mentioned, and those have gotten me thinking. And of course, I, I don't want to feel like the technicality of describing how to phrase or how to show an emo-

tion should actually be the end all.

It's just a way of helping and assisting some students who are talented, gifted, but maybe they're not quite in touch with the purpose of the music, which I think is to effect these changes of emotional states. You know, slow piece can be described as fast music stretched out and a fast piece can be described as very slow music, compressed. But in all cases, I think the change in emotional states is something that, is generally slow moving even if the music is quick. Does that make sense? I'm not quite sure if that explains it clearly, but, even when Mr. Fleisher was singing that beautiful solo to the Brahms Piano Quartet, he was showing how the expression was changing from note to note.

This reminds me a little bit of, um, what, one of my teachers, Paul Kantor, said one summer, and at the time, I don't know that it again, one of those things that didn't make sense to me at the time, but I realized later what he was talking about. Something about how, you know, the sheet music in front of me was a very poor or mediocre, way of capturing what the music actually was.

And that there's only so much detail that you can put onto a page that doesn't really begin to capture the nuances and details of what, symbolically, the black markings were to represent. And it sounds a little bit like, in that sense, I think what you're saying is that each note, like when we're little and we're starting off, each note is really just a measure of time that we're supposed to hold something before we let it go, and we don't really think too much about how that sound should change during the duration of that particular length of time that it's marked as supposedly supposed to take on the page and the beginnings of the notes, the ends of the notes, the, the, within the note itself and how that can change in many different ways depending on how long it is.

I wonder if that's maybe what, I was hearing you say in terms of changing emotional states?

Yeah, when I take lessons, and that's what I always I sort of feel like even at our advanced stage of being professional musicians. We should be having coaches like athletes do, you know? That outside set of eyes, and I play for Ida quite often that getting, sort of a disinterested set of eyes and ears is very helpful, and I think that I encourage my students to have practice buddies so that they have somebody who can kind of not only check on them and help them, but more so to make sure that they're honest with what they're trying to achieve and don't put the rose colored glasses on.

FREE YOUR VOICE

by John Newell, Lead, *Realtime*
from Let It Out ©2013 Used by permission

(continued from last month)

SOFT PALATE

We singers are supposed to raise the soft palate, right? But how high? That depends sometimes on the genre of vocal music. Being told to arch it as far up as possible is detrimental in 90% of singers because it is forced and unnatural.

A singing teacher will rightly say to a singer to raise the soft palate. Unfortunately, even when asked to raise it slightly, an inexperienced singer will over-achieve and raise it as high as possible in a tense and unnatural manner.

Some lifting of the soft palate is often helpful in singing because it provides some back resonance to the voice. It increases the space through which breath passes and can enhance other resonant qualities. This results in a fuller sound.

Let it be noted that a full sound does not necessarily mean louder or bigger. It means a healthy balance of high, middle, and low frequencies. The front nasal resonance provides the high frequencies while enhancing some middle ones. The raising of the soft palate provides the lower frequencies and enhances some middle ones. Too much of the former can result in a strident tone. Too much of the latter can result in a dark and unpleasant tone.

Your soft palate shares a connection with the base of your tongue. When you raise it, the rear of your tongue depresses. Therefore, great care must be taken. If you raise it too far, you create unnecessary tension and muscular force that will detract from your tone and resonance. Over-achieving can reduce the high frequency 'ring' that helps your voice carry, and can make the sound 'muffled' or dark or 'covered', 'swallowed' or strained. Whenever you create tension in your mouth and throat is where your vocal tone will focus. The soft palate is made of soft and pliable tissue which is not great for reinforcing sound. It is a 'space enhancer' and not a 'sounding board'.

Some styles of singing engage the soft palate a great deal, whereas others do not. The more classical the style, the more soft palate space is needed. That is because the classical genres require not only the bright frontal resonance but also a measure of back resonance. Some singers of pop or rock or country western or other styles may or may not engage their soft palates at all.

(to be continued next month)

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Yvonne DeBandi
from a2z-singing-tips.com

S = Sing through the vocal breaks. If you do not teach the muscles the necessary actions to sing through the trouble spots, success will never be achieved. Sing through it, sing through it again, and again....

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Nicole LeGault
from a2z-singing-tips.com

S is for Style. Placement (bass & treble, etc...), singing raunchy or raspy (without going hoarse!), vibrato, and falsetto are all stylistic techniques that can be learned, developed and mastered. Why not be versatile as possible?

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Mick Walsh
from a2z-singing-tips.com

S. Soft Palate. This fleshy little feller needs to be raised when we sing and there's an easy way to do it. Just imagine a little smile at the back of the inside of your throat and hey presto, your soft palate will rise. Have a yawn too. Get used to this yawny feeling as it's something similar to what we want to happen when we raise the soft palate and sing with an open throat. When you yawn though, try not to drop off to sleep. Hello You still there...hello ..wake up!!!

FREE SINGING TIPS

by Teri Danz
from a2z-singing-tips.com

S= Sing, Sing, Sing -- Sing everyday. If you aren't in a group, sing in the car, take classes, and most importantly, do vocal exercises. They will maintain your instrument (and build it) as you look for a steady singing gig.



QUARTET CORNER

Our quartets have re-formed. We need more.

What is YOUR quartet doing? Don't have one? Find three other guys and start one! Can't find a match? Drop me a line and I'll run a list of guys looking to quartet up here in the bulletin. It's one of those really fun things that you don't fully understand until you've done it.

It's never too early to be thinking about Singing Valentines. Quartets are always needed, officially formed or pickup. It's only a few easy songs. Learning more than one voice part to these songs can help make you easier to fit into a quartet.



CHAPTER QUARTETS



On Point

Taylor Gaspar tenor
Daniel Pesante lead
Timothy Keatley bari
Alexander Burney bass

Four More Guys

Dan Kulik tenor
Ken Moyer lead
Jason Dearing bari
John Alexander bass

FlipGive

Here's a simple way to financially support the Big Orange Chorus, at no cost to you! If you shop at any of the more than 400 merchants or like to purchase eGift Cards, FlipGive will give us back from 1% to 20%, depending on the merchant.

To sign up, visit
<https://www.flipgive.com/f/570688>
and start shopping.

Thanks in advance!!

Big Orange Chorus

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	07 Mar	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	14 Mar	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	21 Mar	World Golf Village
Thu	28 Mar	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	04 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	11 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	18 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	25 Apr	Shepherd of the Woods

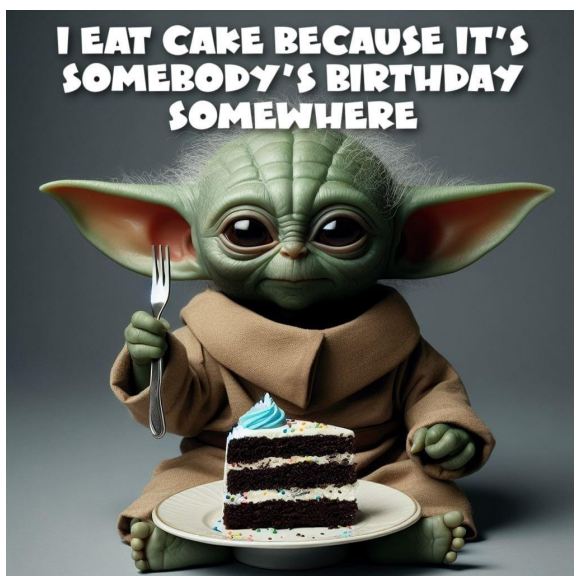
BIRTHDAYS

Ed Fitzgerald	02 Mar
Terry Ezell	07 Mar
Ray Parzik	13 Mar
Daniel Pesante	14 Mar
Rick Morin	15 Mar
Bob Thames	15 Mar
Jan Stenback	31 Mar

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Sat	02 Mar	Icemen game (AAFM)
F/S/S	22-24 Mar	SUN District Spring Convention
Sat	20 Apr	Honor Flight gig
Sat	18 May	Jacksonville Festival of Choirs

...more to come



I'll talk to anyone about anything,
but sooner or later I'll tell him I sing.
I'll invite him to visit on Thursday night
and if he likes what he hears, he just
might become a member and maybe
he'll bring another good man
who likes to sing.

RECENT GUESTS

Jeff Fullmer	Doug Schultz
Ryan Himes	Ron Geno
Mike Ryan	McKayle Callan
Dale Patricu	Gary Weddel
Stephen Gramza	Curt Shepherd
Conner Barber	Craig Dopp
Julian Bryson	Bob Lemons
Jim Hughes	Chris Loken
Elias Dandar	Dean Lang
J Brown	Bill Mumford
Margie Phillips	Shamus McIner
Sirlister Smiley	Rob Taylor
Peter Gugisberg	Toby Max
Carl Kircher	Dante Alcantara
Jon Woodbine	Bob Crino
Cody Rios	John Rios
Peyton Rios	Kadin Rios
Ian Bula	Bill Woods
Bill Woodbeck	Missy Reardon

WELCOME

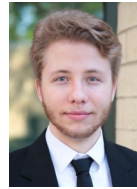
NEWEST MEMBERS

Daniel Pesante	March
Kenneth Moyer	June
Richard Chapman	July
Taylor Despars	September
Dan Kulik	September
Steve Moody	September
Margaret Phillips	September
Lee Hillman	October
Ken Huang	October
Ron Blewett	January
Bob Crino	February
Bob Ice	February

2024 DIRECTING TEAM



Daniel Pesante
Front Line
Director



Timothy Keatley
Assistant
Director

2024 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



David Walker
Uniform
Manager



Les Mower
Chorus
Manager



John Alexander
Bulletin
Editor



Frank Nosalek
Webmaster &
Technology



Ken Moyer
Equipment
Manager

EDITOR'S NOTE

Article and column submissions are solicited.
Help make this a better bulletin. Send me stuff!
The deadline for April is 24 March.
Items without a byline are from the Editor.

The Orange Spiel
John Alexander, Editor
2429 Southern Links Dr
Fleming Island FL 32003

Back issues are available online at:
www.bigorangechorus.com/newsarchive.htm
More specific and timely performance information
is in my weekly sheet, *Orange Zest*.

**Print off two copies
of this newsletter
to share – one with
your family and
one with someone
you are bringing to
a chapter meeting.
Let them know they
belong here!**

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Sec Ldr



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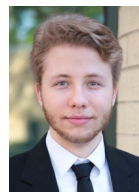
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**IMAGINE 80 SINGERS ON THE RISERS
BE A SINGER-BRINGER**



John Alexander, Editor
2429 Southern Links Dr
Orange Park FL 32003



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