TEACHING YOUNG SINGERS 8-18
WITH FOCUS ON CHANGING VOICE
LECTURE PRESENTED TO HOUSTON NATS
NOVEMBER 20, 2004
BY KATHLEEN MARTIN
UPDATED AND PRESENTED TO SAN DIEGO NATS
OCTOBER 22, 2011

1. Girls & Boys - 8 - 11
2. Girls - 12 - 14
3. Boys - Unchanged 12 - 15
4. Boys - Changing 12 - 15
5. Young Ladies 15 - 18
6. Young Men - Changed 16 - 18

A Partial Listing of Song Collections:

Classical -
2 - 6 Adventures in Singing - A text book on singing, some songs in two keys McGraw-Hill
2 - 6 Album of 25 Favorite Songs for Girls G. Schirmer
2 - 6 American Folksongs - H,L, Moderate difficulty Hal Leonard
5, 6 Anthology of French Song H, L G. Schirmer/HL
5, 6 Anthology of Italian Song of the 17th & 18th Centuries Book 1, 2 G. Schirmer
5, 6 Anthology of Spanish Song - H, L Hal Leonard
5, 6 Arias for S, M, T, Bar, Bss, & Coloratura Sop G. Schirmer
4, 6 Arnold Book of Old Songs, arr. Quilter, Moderate range Boosey & Hawkes
2 - 4 Art of Song Vol. 1, 2 H.L- English Royal School of Music Levels 1-5 Peters
5, 6 Art of Song Vol. 3,4,5 H,M,L - English Royal School of Music Levels 6-8 Peters
5, 6 Art Song Anthology, The – H, L Hal Leonard
2 - 6 Art Songs for School and Studio Vol. 1,2 Med. High - Moderate difficulty Ditson
5, 6 Art Songs in English H, L Boosey & Hawkes
5, 6 Barber - Collected Songs H, L Too difficult for beginners of this age G. Schirmer/HL
2 - 6 Basics of Singing - A text book on singing, some songs in two keys Schirmer Books
2 - 4 Bergerettes, 20 Romances and Songs of the 18th Century, not difficult G. Schirmer/HL
2 - 4 Boosey & Hawkes 20th Century Easy Song Collection Boosey & Hawkes
5, 6 Brahms - 75 songs H, L Good translations Hal Leonard
4, 6 Butterworth - A Shropshire Land and other songs Stainer & Bell
2 - 4 CD Sheetmusic - S/M/T/B Arias, German Lieder, French Art Song - diff keys CDsheetsmusic
5, 6 Contemporary American Art Songs - Taylor Ditson
5, 6 Contemporary American Songs - Taylor H, L Frangipani
5, 6 Contemporary Art Songs G. Schirmer/ HL
2 Daffodils, violets, and snowflakes H,L - English only Hal Leonard
5, 6 Debussy, Songs of Vol. 1 High, 2 Med Good translations Hal Leonard
1 - 4 Easy songs for beginning singers, Parts 1 & 2 S,M/A,T,Bar - English only G. Schirmer/HL
2+ - 6 English Songs Renaissance to Baroque H, L Hal Leonard
2 - 6 Expressive Singing Song Anthology H,M WC Brown
5, 6 Faure - 50 Songs H, ML Good translations Hal Leonard
2 - 6 Faure, Songs by Any key Schubertline
5, 6 Favorite French Art Songs H, L Good translations IPA Hal Leonard
5 Finding Middle Ground - Music for Young Sop. and Mz. GIA
6 Finding Middle Ground – Music for Young Ten., Bar./Bass GIA
2+, 5 First Book of Sop, Mezzo solos - Moderate difficulty G. Schirmer/HL
2+, 5 First Book of Sop, Mezzo solos Part 2 , 3 G. Schirmer/HL
5 Second Book of Sop, Mezzo solos - More advanced than previous vol G. Schirmer/HL
5 Second Book of Sop, Mezzo solos Part 2 G. Schirmer/HL
6 First Book of Ten, Bar/Bass solos - Moderate difficulty G. Schirmer/HL
6 First Book of Ten, Bar/Bass solos Part 2 , 3 G. Schirmer/HL
6 Second Book of Ten, Bar/Bass solos -More advanced than previous vol G. Schirmer/HL
6 Second Book of Ten, Bar/Bass solos Part 2 G. Schirmer/HL
2 - 6 Folk Songs for Solo Singers Vol. 1, 2 MH, ML - Moderate difficulty Alfred
5, 6 French Song Anthology H, L Hal Leonard
5 Gitanjali - Carpenter - Some songs only for the most advanced G. Schirmer
2, 6 Grandi Operisti per Giovani Cantanti - S, M, T, Bar, Bss Ricordi
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**Literature for Voice - An Index of Songs in Collections Vol. 1 & 2 by Thomas Golecke**
Musical Theater -
2 - 6  Big Book of Broadway                              Hal Leonard
2,5,4,6 Broadway for Teens – Young Women, Young Men    Hal Leonard
5,6  Contemporary Singing Actor Vol. 1,2 Women, Men    Hal Leonard
5,6  Contemporary Theater Songs S, M, Men               Hal Leonard
2 - 6  Definitive Broadway Collection                   Hal Leonard
1  Illustrated Treasury of Disney Songs                  Hal Leonard
2 - 6  First Book of Broadway Solos - S,M, T, B/B       Hal Leonard
5,6  Gilbert & Sullivan for Singers - S,M,T,B/B         Hal Leonard
2,5,4,6 Great Songs from Musicals for Teens – Young Women, Young Men Hal Leonard
1  Kid’s Broadway Songbook                               Hal Leonard
1,2,3  Kid’s Musical Theater Anthology                   Hal Leonard
1  Kid’s Stage and Screen                                Hal Leonard
2 - 6  Musical Theater Anthology for Teens - Young Women, Young Men, Duets Hal Leonard
1  Popular Solos for Young Singers                      Hal Leonard
5,6  Singers Musical Theater Anthology Vol. 1,2,3 S,M,T,B/B, Duets Hal Leonard
2,5,4,6 Singers Musical Theater Anthology for Teens - S, Mz, T, B/B Hal Leonard
1  Solos for Kids                                       Hal Leonard
1  Solos from Musicals for Kids                          Hal Leonard
2 - 6  Teen’s Musical Theater Anthology – Female, Male  Alfred
2 - 6  Teen’s Musical Theater Collection - Young Women, Young Men Hal Leonard
2,5,4,6 Tunes for Teens from Musicals – Young Women, Young Men Hal Leonard
2 - 6  16-bar Theater Audition, The S,M,T,B               Hal Leonard
LECTURE TOPICS

- **At what age should we begin lessons?**
  a. I begin at about 7-8 yrs. but you can begin at any age.
  b. Reading ability
  c. Concentration

- **Classical vs Musical Theater and Popular at early ages.**
  a. Popular ie. Disney, animated, easy MT
  b. Easy songs for S,M,T,B; Solos for Kids, 36 solos for Young Singers

- **At what age should we begin foreign language and which one/s?**
  a. As soon as possible if the child shows no resistance.
  b. Begin with Dites-moi or Nel cor piu non mi sento, International Folk Songs.
  c. Later Bergerettes, Eng. Royal School of Music or Royal Canadian School

- **Advanced repertoire at early ages: what and how much?**
  a. Depends on aptitude and desire on child’s part.
  b. Hold off arias and/or redirect when possible.
  c. If child persists you may find abbreviated version or some simple arias. “Grandi Operisti per Giovanni Cantanti”
    a. possibility as well as some early Mozart.

- **Theory, sight singing, rhythm**
  a. Good to have a structured program ie. MTAC but if none available, do it yourself.
  b. So important esp. for potential music majors.
  c. Stress piano lessons when possible (class piano), universities looking for well-rounded students.

- **Recitals, competitions, evaluation programs.**
  a. Begin with recitals and evaluation programs and move to competitions as soon as they will.
  b. Emphasize doing it for the experience.
  c. The experience makes them more confident and more accustomed to auditions.

- **Should we teach through the young male voice change?**
  a. Yes. The transition is much smoother with less popping; student retains high range with less problems with continued training.

- **What are the typical ages?**
  a. Boys 12 - 15
  b. Girls 11 - 14

- **What changes take place and what are the first signs?**
  a. Hands, feet, growth spurt.
  b. Boys voices gain progressively more notes in lower register while retaining high.

- **What are the typical problems?**
  a. High becomes progressively more difficult and loses clarity.
  b. Often a hole appears between approx. F above middle C and C above middle C. (This is what will soon be the head or head mix of the changed voice and takes a few years to come in with any strength and should not be forced.)
  c. An excess of air in the tone is inherent in many young voices because all their laryngeal muscles do not develop at the same rate. The muscles inside the larynx suddenly and dramatically outgrow those outside the larynx.

- **Progression through the mid to late teens.**
  a. Some boys voices march down the scale.
  b. Others drop low and then come back up.
  c. Once the voice settles, it normally has a range of about an octave and slowly adds notes above and below.
  d. Per Richard Alderson “Complete Handbook of Voice training” there is evidence showing that the younger a boy is when his voice changes, the lower and heavier the voice will be. Some of these low voices tend to rise (in tessitura) as they mature.
  e. Planning ahead for recitals or competitions is very challenging.
  f. It is necessary to find repertoire of limited range in multiple keys as the voice often changes on a monthly basis.
  g. Schubertline, Sibelius or other notation software.

- **How do girls differ? Compare ranges.**
  a. Girls stay in the same octave but typically lose clarity while gaining depth.
  b. Potential mezzos may have been high sopranos in unchanged voice. These voices often change quite radically, losing top and gaining much warmth in lower and middle voice. There seems to be no correlation between range in girls unchanged voice with range in changed voice according to Alderson.
  c. Some voices become very low and husky and others, seem to change very little in range, gaining mainly in quality and depth.
  d. Again it is often necessary to choose songs that have many keys available or take time to transpose or have a good software notation program.

- **Are we assigning too much material of a difficult nature too soon?**
  With the competitive nature of our society it is difficult to not be pulled into assigning difficult and challenging material to our most gifted and ambitious students.