

**“Musical Viewpoints:
Applying Somatic Acting Methods to the Undergraduate Classical Voice Curriculum”**

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“The highest truth is found in the synthesis of contraries.”

-H. Wesley Balk

In the fall of 2021, Janet Brown, the head of Syracuse University's voice program, expressed her frustrations with getting classical voice students to emotionally connect to repertoire and effectively tell the story of the piece. I related to her dilemma, having personally worked to overcome an emotional block when performing classical repertoire. As a crossover artist with training as a musician, theatre practitioner, and educator, I took it upon myself to seek a solution to the lack of acting training in classical voice programs, particularly in art song performance. In my first semester of graduate studies, I researched three texts to be incorporated into an "Acting for Classical Singers" course: Meyerhold's *Biomechanics*,¹ *Respect for Acting* by Uta Hagen,² and Barry Edelstein's book, *Thinking Shakespeare*.³

While these texts are significant parts of my practice as a theatre artist, I considered that breaking each text down and applying it to voice performance would take away valuable time in programs where students are already overbooked and filled with information. I decided to include fewer structured parameters, encouraging free movement to music. *Movement to Music* is a Chicago-based acting methodology that incorporates elements of devised and physical theatre. I thought that for classical singers, complete freedom would be the most beneficial within a system that requires order. In July of 2022, I presented that earlier version of my research at the IUGTE interdisciplinary performing arts conference in Leibnitz, Austria. Participating musicians, theatre practitioners, and educators responded that they saw merit to the idea, but wished there was more structure.

Throughout my training, professors often use lists of elements as a framework for artistic

¹ Mel Gordon and Alma Law, *Meyerhold, Einstein, and Biomechanics: Actor Training in Revolutionary Russia* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company Inc. Publishers, 2012).

² Uta Hagen and Haskel Frankel, *Respect for Acting*, (Hoboken, New York: Macmillan, 1973).

³ Barry Edelstein, *Thinking Shakespeare*, (New York, NY: Theatre Communications Group, 2018).

expression and analysis, and I have always been drawn to methods that involve finding freedom within a categorized system. I understood the conference participants' suggestions that a method that combines structure and creativity is most conducive to artistry. Upon further investigation, I learned that "Viewpoints"⁴, the method I am fond of in my work as a director, holds similarities to another familiar list; Carol Kimball's style analysis tools⁵. The style analysis done in song literature classes is primarily developed by sitting at a desk and listening to recognize patterns. For musicians, a well developed ear is paramount in order to analyze, perform, and teach repertoire. I pulled from elements of devised theatre, somatic vocal pedagogy methods, and style analysis tools to create "Musical Viewpoints".

"Musical Viewpoints" are an amalgamation of Mary Overlie and Anne Bogart's ideas with Carol Kimball's categories of musical style. I also pulled inspiration from Aristotle's *Poetics* which are his described elements of drama. Anne Bogart's "Viewpoints" are: tempo, duration, kinesthetic response, repetition, shape, gesture, architecture, spatial relationship, and topography. Carol Kimball's elements of style are melody, harmony, rhythm, accompaniment, and text. Kimball and Bogart's ideas are a natural fit for one another, with Bogart and Landeau's book on Viewpoints directly referencing the "composition" of movement.⁶ The structure of learning Viewpoints is a kinesthetic ensemble experience led by a practitioner, and can, but does not always, involve music. By using the structure of a Viewpoints class to move to music and understand the feeling behind compositional and poetic choices, voice students may gain a well-rounded approach to vocalization and storytelling. Singers would listen to repertoire with

⁴ Anne Bogart and Tina Landeau, *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*, (New York, NY: Theatre Communications Group, 2005).

⁵ Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2006).

⁶ Anne Bogart and Tina Landeau, *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*, (New York, NY: Theatre Communications Group, 2005).

guidance in which element of style to focus on, moving intuitively to that aspect of the music.

With each element of style, movement prompts singers to discover how their bodies connect to the music. For melody, they may respond to whether the vocal line is linear or disjunct, diatonic or chromatic, the range and tessitura, whether there are ornaments, the vocal timbre of the recorded singer (which could be a past recording of themselves), and more. Harmonically, movement may be inspired by modulations, recurring harmonies, use of modality, cadences, and the overall harmonic feel. Rhythmically, the tempo, meter, and use of rhythmic devices may impact interpretation. Singers may also pull from the role of the instrumentation in collaboration with the voice; how the two or more parts align and contrast one another, the impact of solo instrumental sections, and the texture and density. In response to the text, they may let the poetic meter and devices, form, imagery, and text painting inform their movement. The instructor focuses on one initial aspect before adding additional elements, encouraging singers to focus on the music, the space around them, and their bodies in relation to the space.

This tool may serve singers in every step of performance preparation including text interpretation, learning pitch and rhythm, memorization, and healthy vocal technique. Existing somatic methods in both vocal pedagogy and theatre training set a precedent for the benefits of mind-body work as a teaching tool. Musical Viewpoints could stand on its own as an acting/movement class for singers, act as a unit within a larger acting for singers course, or be implemented in a vocal literature course, adding a kinesthetic component to style analysis.

In this paper, I will assess overlap of somatic methods used in voice education and theatre education up to and including the collegiate level, using H. Wesley Balk's music theatre research as a figurehead. Then, I will argue the necessity of incorporating movement-based acting methods into classical voice training based on brain and body function, critiquing the current

curriculum requirements of most undergraduate voice performance programs. Using the evidence from existing somatic methods and studies, I will suggest an Acting for Singers class syllabus that combines Anne Bogart and Marie Overley's Viewpoints with Carol Kimball's style assessment tools. Musical Viewpoints may benefit body awareness, vocal technique, musical analysis, and emotional interpretation.

Somatic Methods

Somatic methods are a form of movement methods that include movement with kinesthetic awareness and intention,⁷ and are a significant element of teaching music from a young age to the professional level. They have been shown to improve rhythm, pitch, cognitive elements, and emotional interpretation.⁸ Methods including Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, Dalcroze, Laban, Balk, LoVetri, Gaga, Bartenieff, Linklater, and Viewpoints are applied in the fields of music, theatre, and dance, as well as extending into general wellness and injury prevention (which is outside the purview of this paper). Each of them provides a kinesthetic approach to the mind-body connection. There is existing research on the synthesis of movement and voice, but much of it applies to intentional gestures used in the choral rehearsal process. Carlton E. Kilpatrick published a literature review of movement and gesture in voice training in 2020, writing "Spontaneous movements inspired by music were not considered in this review of literature. Although both could affect vocal production, they are not commonly thought of as ways to improve vocal performance."⁹ Kilpatrick restricts his research to choral performance,

⁷ Melanie Leanne Holm, "The Voice Somatics Integration Lab: Developing Kinesthetic Connections through Voice and Movement," (PhD. diss., Arizona State University, 2020).

⁸ Carlton E. Kilpatrick III, "Movement, Gesture, and Singing: A Review of Literature," *SAGE Journals*, 38, no. 3 (Feb 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123320908612>.

⁹ Carlton E. Kilpatrick III, "Movement, Gesture, and Singing: A Review of Literature," *SAGE Journals*, 38, no. 3 (Feb 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123320908612>.

however I argue that there is merit to spontaneous movement inspired by music as a tool to improve solo voice performance.

Alexander Technique

Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869-1955) developed a method of encouraging free and balanced body alignment. Although not exclusive to actors and singers, his work is intended to reduce performance anxiety and provide performers with an openness to the world of the song. Alexander theorizes that performers establish non-ideal posture in their everyday lives, building habits that need to be observed and replaced with balanced pathways through training. Because most required classes in voice performance programs are confined to sitting at a desk (music history, music theory, languages, song literature, etc.), the problem is exacerbated. Rob Macdonald describes the relevance of proper alignment in Niamh Dowling's essay, "Moving into Performance: Using the Principles of Alexander Technique to Underpin and Enhance an Actor's Training."¹⁰ He explains: "Because the voice is suspended in the body, its free activity depends on the postural mechanism working efficiently; any inefficiency of the postural body will impose limitations on the voice. The Alexander Technique, by bringing the natural body support, gives the voice the support it needs and the chance to work freely."¹¹ Body awareness is a key component of Alexander Technique, which is important vocally and somatically.

Alexander also pulls from brain function to develop efficient postural and vocal habits. Vocal pedagogue and Alexander Technique instructor, Gwen Walker, references how myelinated pathways in the brain form automatic habits.¹² Myelinated pathways do not recognize negatives,

¹⁰ Niamh Dowling, "Moving into Performance: Using the Principles of Alexander Technique to Underpin and Enhance an Actor's Training," *Australian Drama Studies* 53 (Oct 2008): 160-163.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Gwen Walker, "Alexander Technique" (presentation, One Body, One Voice, August, 2022).

so if one voices to themselves “do not lift your chin to reach the high note”, the brain will not hear the “do not”, and tension will increase. Another necessary component is rhythm. Training in Alexander Technique emphasizes breaking a performer’s natural speech pattern and allows them freedom to discover the rhythm of the character, a concept which carries over to musical rhythm as well.¹³

Alexander Technique is an elective taught at Syracuse University in the School of Music by Kathy Miranda, who I interviewed for this paper. When asked about the challenges of working with performers, Miranda articulated that “with singers, there is often a lot of internal pressure to ‘get it right’, and actors have more of leeway about what they expect ‘right’ to be,”¹⁴ which reinforces the differences in music and theatre training as described by H. Wesley Balk.¹⁵ She offered to give me an introductory private session so I could better understand the experience of practicing Alexander Technique. In the session, we talked about my movement patterns and alignment, and then she walked me through a full body map exercise, bringing the connections of each major joint and the physiological balance taking place. With guided instruction and hands-on movement, we worked towards finding balance and freedom of movement in my body. I left the session feeling floaty and less tense.¹⁶

Feldenkrais

A relative of Alexander Technique for its origin in injury prevention and general wellness, the Feldenkrais method was originated by Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais throughout his career from the 1940s-80s as a means of pain management and recovery. Similarly to Alexander

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Kathy Miranda, interviewed by Micah Patt on October 17, 2022.

¹⁵ H. Wesley Balk, *The Complete Singer-Actor: Training for Music Theater* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1985).

¹⁶ Kathy Miranda, interviewed by Micah Patt on October 17, 2022.

Technique, the method focuses on body awareness through guided movement and observation.¹⁷ In an interview with Feldenkrais specialist, Anita Bueno, she advised me that Feldenkrais is so kinesthetic that it is difficult to understand without directly experiencing it.¹⁸ She describes the method as “using your inner authority and listening to yourself. It is a subjective way of moving through the world. It is based in developmental psychology, how we learn to be in the world before school and curricula... it’s organic learning that happens innately and is more process oriented than goal oriented”.¹⁹ The two standard class formats are Awareness Through Movement®, which is led by verbal instruction, and Functional Integration®, which is a hands-on modality. In Awareness Through Movement® classes, the instructor leads participants through a series of “movement puzzles” cultivated by Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais that are designed to stimulate the brain and inspire thoughtful movement.²⁰ In Functional Integration® lessons, instructors encourage the body to find non-habitual, healthy patterns of movement.²¹ Although originally designed for injury relief applications, it is now used in the arts as a means to free the body for performance.

When asked how Feldenkrais applies to vocal pedagogy, Anita Bueno replied “Sound is literally movement. It is all connected.”²² Bueno demonstrates the connection in her workshop that combines Feldenkrais with the voice training of Kristen Linklater. Feldenkrais has also been used at the Royal Shakespeare Center to assist actors with their articulation, volume, resonance,

¹⁷ “About The Feldenkrais Method,” *Feldenkrais Method*, accessed October 25, 2022. <https://feldenkrais.com/about-the-feldenkrais-method/>.

¹⁸ Anita Bueno, interviewed by Micah Patt on October 19, 2022.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ “What is Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement,” produced by Future Life Now, April 30, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=150&v=NQjBXunhOVQ&feature=emb_title.

²¹ “Functional Integration- Feldenkrais,” produced by Margaret Kaye, August 20, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=113&v=umYMxi88Yyc&feature=emb_title.

²² Anita Bueno, interviewed by Micah Patt, October 19, 2022.

and clarity.²³ With the changing landscape of acting training moving towards more inside-out, naturalistic methods, theatre practitioners at Royal Shakespeare Center found that many of their young actors lacked the stamina to perform vocally demanding Shakespearean texts. Feldenkrais instructors were brought into the company to lead warm-ups as well as give individualized instruction. Although noting that the method takes time to yield benefits and restructure habits, overall it resulted in freer and more aware performances.²⁴ Classical voice training and classical acting training have similar vocal requirements, and Feldenkrais is used to benefit both. Unlike Laban and Viewpoints, it focuses less on storytelling and emotional interpretation and more on building creative brain pathways in the physiological sense.

Dalcroze

The most commonly taught movement-based music education model for younger students is a method championed by Emile Jacques Dalcroze, “Dalcroze’s eurhythmics” The four pillars of the Dalcroze method are:

- 1.) Perceiving and responding to music.
- 2.) Developing an inner sense of music
- 3.) Sharpening communication between the ear, eye, body, and mind.
- 4.) Developing a repertoire of aural and kinesthetic images that are associated with musical notation.²⁵

Dalcroze created a series of exercises that aim to utilize communication between the

²³ Richard Allen Cave, “Feldenkrais and actors: working with the Royal Shakespeare Company,” *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* 6, no. 2 (Jul 2015): 174-186, <https://www-tandfonline-com.libezproxy2.syr.edu/doi/full/10.1080/19443927.2015.1027454>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Carlton E. Kilpatrick, “Movement, Gesture, and Singing: A Review of Literature,” *SAGE Journals*, Feb 24, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123320908612>.

brain and the body. He describes this process as “developing a fast and light system of communication between all the agents of movement and thinking.”²⁶ A 2014 study conducted by the Institute of Neuroscience, System, and Cognition development in Montreal, Canada backed up Dalcroze’s ideas. Researchers found that body movement can selectively shape how the brain responds to auditory rhythms, writing, “Although body movement has long been considered an axiom in music theory and education (Jacques Dalcroze, 1920), behavioral evidence has been provided only recently.”²⁷ Dalcroze’s method of music education is backed up by the previously established concept that movement and music are neurologically linked. When gesture and movement are incorporated into voice pedagogy, pitch, memory, articulation, and rhythm are consistently reported to improve.²⁸

Unfortunately, after early childhood music education, application of Dalcroze’s Eurhythmics drops off, following a larger trend of less play and movement based education as students age. Education for performers in classical music leans sedentary as students progress in their training.

Laban

Although less commonly taught in classical voice spaces, Rudolf Laban’s (1879-1958) method of dance training is a comprehensible format that connects the body to emotions, and in practice uses guided movement to music to connect to the “efforts’ “. Laban’s “cube of efforts” is an efficient way to get performers thinking about embodying emotions and actions (see fig. 1). The efforts are broken into four categories, each with contrasting extremes. The four themes are

²⁶ Diane K. Daley, “Creativity, Autonomy, and Dalcroze Eurythmics: An Arts Practice Exploration,” *International Journal of Music Education* (2021).

²⁷ Baptiste Chemin, André Mouraux, and Sylvie Nozaradan, “Body Movement Selectively Shapes the Neural Representation of Musical Rhythms,” *Association for Psychological Science*, (2014).

²⁸ Ibid.

inner/outer, function/expression, exertion/recuperation, and mobility/stability. His vocabulary provides quick categorization and potential shifts in energy for the performer, and can be a helpful way to play with different choices for a piece. A Laban exercise for the singer could be to try a passage while moving between contrasting efforts, and observe how it impacts their storytelling and vocal production.

In her article discussing the implementation of Bartlief, Laban, and Linklater voice training for actors, Ruth Rootberg writes “The actor might discover such choices in the process of transforming themselves into a character. As a result of this transformation, the voice may organically find different colors, resonance, and modes of expression. This approach to the expressive adaptations of the voice is very important.”²⁹ Despite the Laban method’s closeness to the method I will ultimately suggest for classical singers, there are two issues that prevent ideal application. He was a known supporter of nazism and used his position as director of the German Dance Theater to promote the beliefs of the Third Reich, which brings a sinister lens to his work.³⁰ Additionally, some of the vocabulary Laban uses in his efforts, specifically “pressing”, is associated with pressed phonation, and could have unintended consequences for the singer, especially considering Gwen Walker’s discussion of myelinated pathways and unintentional physical consequences of negative directions. While Rootberg is the only major example I found that explored the relevance of movement-based acting training for singers, it continues the precedent.

²⁹ Ruth Rootberg, “Moving Towards Vocal Center: Integrating Laban Movement Analysis and Bartlief Fundamentals with a Linklater Vocal Warm-up,” *Voice and Speech Review* 1, no. 1, 2000: 291-313, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2000.10761425>.

³⁰ Christine Dickson, “Dance Under the Swastika: Rudolf von Laban’s Influence on Nazi Power,” *International Journal of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities* 8, no. 7, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2000.10761425>.

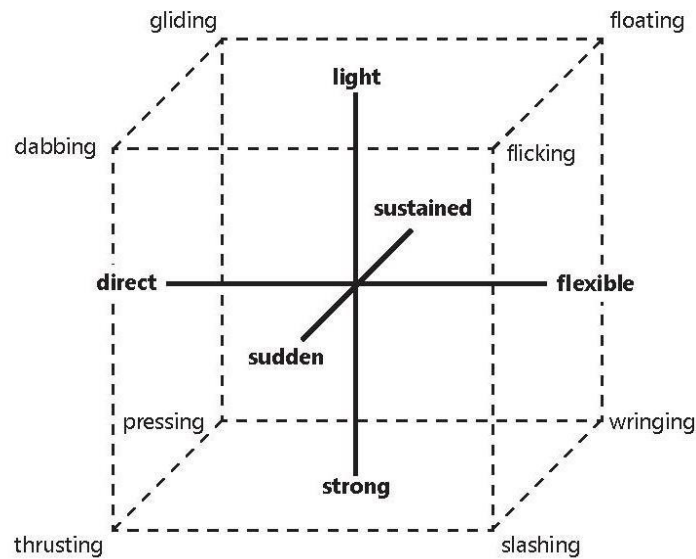


Figure 1. Laban's cube of efforts.

H. Wesley Balk and Ann Baltz

While many somatic methods discussed in this paper address the kinesthetic experience of the singer's own mind-body connections, not all extend to the kinesthetic experience of a character. Unfortunately, specific references to acting and storytelling are frequently left out of the conversation when it comes to research in the voice pedagogy field. Erin Heisel's journal article "Empathy as a Tool for Embodiment Processes in Vocal Performance"³¹ dances around the well-researched craft of acting by using the term "empathy." She encourages classical vocalists to empathize with their characters and the audience, suggesting journaling and character analysis as tools to achieve it. Her ideas dodge the existent research of great acting teachers such as Konstantin Stanislavski, who articulates what Heisel is attempting to explain far

³¹ Erin Heisel, "Empathy as a Tool for Embodiment Processes in Vocal Performance," *Empirical Musicology Review* 10, no. 2 (2015): 104-110, <https://www.proquest.com/iimp/docview/1737438297/E47F656E713448>.

more concisely and specifically in his landmark acting book *An Actor Prepares*.³² Matt Bean, crossover singer and voice pedagogue, advocates for increased focus on Stanislavski's methodology in his 1998 journal article "Gesture in Art Song and Opera,"³³ describing the plight of gesturing in classical voice performance. He argues against the school of thought that "good gesture is no gesture"³⁴ describing a world in which "many singers sense the necessity of sustaining the gestural energy in response to music, but they do not have the freedom to commit themselves to a full gestural statement."³⁵ Bean draws from H. Wesley Balk's *Performing Power*, where he rejects the idea that all gestures are superfluous distractions from the music.³⁶

Research on acting for the singer has been discussed for decades and is beginning to receive more attention in the voice pedagogy community, but this research has not yet resulted in any significant change in the standard curriculum. At the National Association for Teachers of Singing conference, the past three annual national conferences have held one workshop, out of dozens that directly references acting for classical singers.³⁷ The 2022 conference program includes several mentions of crossover and musical theatre voice training, but does not address the specific acting needs of classical singers. The standard staging in art song performance requires a heightened focus and ability to build a world without the assistance of costumes, props, staging, or a scene partner. It is a common thought in musical theatre performance that the show "comes alive" in tech rehearsals when all costumes and technical elements are added, and art song recitalists never experience this boost.

³² Konstantin Stanislavski, *An Actor Prepares* (New York, NY: Theatre Arts, 1936).

³³ Matt Bean, "Gesture in Art Song and Opera," *Journal of Singing* 54, no. 5 (May 1998): 37-39, <https://www.proquest.com/iimp/docview/1401940/A419130D19C84AE5PQ>.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ NATS 2022 Conference Program, accessed October 1, 2022, https://issuu.com/natsinc/docs/nats_chicago22_conference_program

The most straightforward integration of music, movement, and acting is in H. Wesley Balk's research on opera performance in his books, *The Complete Singer Actor*, *Performing Power*, and *The Radiant Performer*.³⁸ He introduces the necessity of interdisciplinary study by playfully describing the two lands of Theatrylvania and Musiconia, describing the paradigms of education in both worlds, and how it can result in a confused performer. Critiquing the pedagogical ideologies of both fields, he writes, "The confusion that exists about the terms realism, naturalism, and believability has created a swamp of acting systems and jargon surpassed only by the morass of religiosity and terminology surrounding vocal pedagogy"³⁹. The philosophical differences (see fig. 2) highlight the possible conflicts of training competent singer-actors. Balk finds the balance between the worlds, arguing that "The highest truth is found in the synthesis of contraries."⁴⁰ Balk uses movement and vocal improvisation to inspire musicians to move towards freedom in their performances.

A student of Balk and innovator in her own right, Ann Baltz's method, OperaworksTM uses Balk's exercises in vocal improvisation while adding her own focus on positive feedback and emotional support for the performer.⁴¹ In her work as a collaborative pianist and stage director, Baltz found that many professional companies asked performers to do things as singer-actors that were never in their training.⁴² Her program emphasizes nurturing a healthy psyche in the performer, and a 2017 study of students who participated in an OperaworksTM intensive found that after the training, students experienced increases in self-esteem and less

³⁸ H. Wesley Balk, *The Complete Singer-Actor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴¹ Ann Baltz, "Philosophy," *OperaworksTM*, accessed November 28, 2022.

⁴² *Ibid.*

anxiety.⁴³ Baltz’s work with vocal improvisation reinforces the necessity of getting performers out of their heads and into their bodies to feel where the music is taking them.

Although Balk and Baltz focus primarily on opera performance, his research is relevant to singer-actors in any genre. Corbin Abernathy and Sarah Wigly, advocates of cross training for the singer-actor, brought up Balk and Baltz as inspiration for their research and pedagogy.⁴⁴ Sarah Wigly, head of University of Illinois’s Lyric Theatre explained that Balk’s work heavily influenced her desire to create a specifically crossover program where students take both classical and CCM voice lessons as well as acting, dance, and traditional theory and history courses.⁴⁵ Baltz’s innovations are surprisingly under-researched and implemented in classical voice programs considering he caters specifically to opera singers.

Music	Theatre
Vertical lyric expansion	Horizontal action development
Reason, Logic	Feeling, Emotion
Memorization	Improvisation
Art	Life
External	Internal
Limits	Commitment
Self-Confidence	Self-Analysis
Discipline	Freedom
Seriousness	Playfulness

⁴³ Paula Thomson, S. Victoria Jacque, and Ann Baltz, “Intensive opera training effects: a psychological investigation,” *International Journal of Music Education* 35, no. 4 (Nov 2017): 479-489.

⁴⁴ Corbin Abernathy, interviewed by Micah Patt, October 11, 2022.

⁴⁵ Sarah Wigly, interviewed by Micah Patt, October 31, 2022.

Re-creation	Creation
Repose	Energy
Difference	Likeness
Natural	Formal

Figure 2. Balk’s comparison of music and theatre.

Overlie and Bogart’s Viewpoints

Although co-opted by Anne Bogart, the original Six Viewpoints are a method of movement interpretation crafted by dancer and choreographer, Mary Overlie. The controversy involved in the origin of Viewpoints is outside the extent of this paper. The Six Viewpoints are performance ‘materials’ including Space, Shape, Time, Emotion, Movement, and Story. “Both shift the focus of what the actor is training with– from the emotional life of the actor-in-character in service of plot to the material aspects of theatre that exist outside the actor’s body, such as space and time.”⁴⁶ Overlie’s Viewpoints were originally designed for modern dancers, and Bogart’s are most commonly used in devised theatre work and in stage movement training. There is a precedent for this technique to span multiple artistic disciplines, and there are overlaps with Viewpoints and elements of music that form our concepts of style. Anne Bogart’s process is at odds with the philosophies of “realism” acting teachers such as Konstantin Stanislavski, Lee Strasberg, and Sanford Meisner.⁴⁷ Her ideas are more suited to classical singers than the aforementioned because of the technical and spatial concerns. Inside-out acting will not

⁴⁶ Tony Perucci, “The Actor as the Observer-Participant,” *Performance Research* 25, no. 8 (2020): 161-165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2020.1935768>.

⁴⁷ Tashida Suzuki, “Creating a New/Different America,” *Anne Bogart’s Viewpoints* (Lyme, NH: Smith and Kraus, Inc., 1995): 85.

necessarily be as conducive to singing in a large concert hall. The inside-out versus outside-in acting debate has been held for generations of professionals and neither is correct for all situations, however for the classical singing format, the latter is better suited.

At the core of Bogart's Viewpoints is a concept she refers to as "source-work".⁴⁸ Source-work is a form of preparation for rehearsals that involves the performer creating what the world of the story means to them in an open-ended manner. In addition to talking and writing about source-work, Viewpoint training is used to enhance the world of the piece for the performers. Within the Viewpoints of Time, Bogart describes a breakdown of tempo, duration, kinesthetic response, and repetition, which are all components that apply to music.

While Viewpoints originated as a means to create innovative staging and build a cohesive ensemble, the process also benefits the individual. Tina Landau writes, "the actor, in the case of Viewpoints, exercises awareness (of the different Viewpoints), the ability to listen with the entire body, and a sense of spontaneity and extremity."⁴⁹ A holistic somatic approach to teaching acting and movement to classical singers that incorporates elements of all of the aforementioned methodologies would be consequential in the field of vocal pedagogy. Using Viewpoints as the centerpiece to connect the singer to the music is a pathway towards training singers to develop a strong ear-mind-body connection.

Additional Methods

While compiling interdisciplinary somatic methods and interviewing experts, several additional methods including LoVetri, Bartenieff, Linklater, Gaga, and Ideokinesis were mentioned. Somatic VoiceworkTM, created by contemporary vocal pedagogue, Jeanette LoVetri,

⁴⁸ Tina Landau, "Source-Work, the Viewpoints, and Composition: What Are They?" *Anne Bogart's Viewpoints* (Lyme, NH: Smith and Kraus, Inc., 1995): 19.

⁴⁹ Tina Landau, "Source-Work, the Viewpoints, and Composition: What Are They?" *Anne Bogart's Viewpoints* (Lyme, NH: Smith and Kraus, Inc., 1995): 24.

focuses on using exercises that heighten kinesthetic and aural awareness to navigate registration shifts.⁵⁰ She teaches classical, musical theatre, and CCM (Contemporary Commercial Music) and educates voice teachers on how to best prescribe vocal exercises to assist students. Often grouped with Laban, Bartenieff Fundamentals, developed by Irmgard Bartenieff, originated as healthy movement exercises for dancers.⁵¹ Bartenieff also shares ties with Kristin Linklater, whose work is applied in speech and voice. Linklater's book, *Freeing the Natural Voice* is a staple in Voice and Articulation classes for actors.⁵² Linklater centers around the four steps of vocalization: The impulse to speak, breath entering the body, vocal folds approximating, vibrations reverberating through resonators, and the articulation into speech by the lips and the tongue."⁵³ She emphasizes the psychological impulse to speak and how by doubting oneself at the impetus of phonation, singers create excess tension.

Returning to methods with origins in dance, Gaga movement is a workout method intended to connect to senses and wake up the body.⁵⁴ Like Laban and Viewpoints, Gaga classes use imagery and the texture of the space to inspire interpretive movement to music. It was originated by choreographer Ohad Naharin and is practiced most commonly in Tel Aviv. Gaga classes are split into two tracks, one for dancers, and one for non-dancers, but both use the same

⁵⁰ Andrew R. White, "Vocal Traditions: Somatic Voicework™ The LoVetri Method," *Voice and Speech Review* 11, no. 2, 2017: 240-248, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2017.1383559>.

⁵¹ E.M. Wanke, "Bartenieff Fundamentals," *Zentralblatt für Arbeitsmedizin, Arbeitsschutz und Ergonomie* 67, 2017: 37-39, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40664-016-0151-3>.

⁵² Kristin Linklater, *Freeing the Natural Voice* (Hollywood, CA: Drama Publishers, 2006).

⁵³ Kristin Linklater, "Vocal Traditions: Linklater Voice Method," *Voice and Speech Review* 12, no. 2 (2018): 211-220, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2018.1444558>.

⁵⁴ "About Gaga," Accessed November 6, 2022, <https://www.gagapeople.com/en/>.

core principles.⁵⁵ Ideokinesis, created by Lulu E. Sweigard and popularized in New York City in the 1970s, was founded as a means to prevent injuries in dancers through body movement and gestures.⁵⁶

All of these methods share a common interest of increasing freedom, health, and mind-body connection for both interdisciplinary performers and for humanity as a whole. Each has its own idiosyncrasies and audience. Classical voice students should receive an introduction in a wide variety to discover what suits their own process. The class syllabus developed in the final section of this paper incorporates elements from several somatic methods while grounding in the vocabulary of Viewpoints. In the following section of this paper, I will introduce the neurological evidence in favor of using somatic methods in vocal pedagogy.

Mind-Body Connection

Vocal pedagogue Lynn Holding proposes that there are three pillars of understanding the voice: physiology, acoustics, and neurology.⁵⁷ While the first two pillars have a plethora of existing research, the third is still in the discovery stages. By establishing the neural connections of how vocalization is processed in the brain and enacted in the rest of the body, we can better select exercises and methods to cater to those connections. The somatic methods discussed in this paper have not historically had a basis in neuroscience, rather on anecdotal evidence from the innovators. Emerging voice science research backs up methods that have been practiced for over a century.

⁵⁵ Megan Quinlan, "Gaga as Metatechnique: Negotiating Choreography, Improvisation, and Technique in a Neoliberal Dance Market," *Dance Research Journal* 49, no. 2 (2017): 26-43, muse.jhu.edu/article/668981.

⁵⁶ Drid Williams, *Teaching Dance with Ideokinetic Principles* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press): 2011.

⁵⁷ Lynn Holding, "Evidence-Based Voice Pedagogy (EBVP), Part 3: Student Goals and Perspectives," *Journal of Singing* 78, no. 5 (Spring 2022): 635-640, muse.jhu.edu/article/853248.

The somatosensory cortex in the parietal lobe and the motor cortex in the frontal lobe affect sense processing and voluntary movement, respectively, and each body part has a corresponding area in both of the two cortices.⁵⁸ There are two larynx motor areas, which are referred to as “LMCs,” and both partially control the larynx. These two areas are the dorsal larynx motor cortex (dLMC) and the ventral larynx motor cortex (vLMC).⁵⁹ The vLMC is located in the primary motor cortex, and the dLMC is located within the central sulcus, which is also a part of the primary motor cortex. Michel Beltyk, Rachel Brown, Deryk Beat, and their collaborators find that “neither the dLMC nor the vLMC are strictly laryngeal, and that both may integrate laryngeal and respiratory control.”⁶⁰ These two areas are essential in the process of vocalization. The four steps of vocalization are: Auditory input, mental processing, vocal pathway, and vocalization, with feedback from the produced sound re-inputting to the beginning of the cycle. See figures 3 and 4 from the journal article, “The Control of Vocal Pitch in Human Laryngeal Motor Cortex” by Benjamin Dichter, Jonathan Breshears, Matthew Leonard, and Edward Chang, which depicts the dLMC’s involvement in vocalization.

⁵⁸ Andrew Byrne, *The Singing Athlete* (New York, NY: Andrew Byrne Studio Inc.): 2020.

⁵⁹ Michel Beltyk, Rachel Brown, Deryk S. Beat, et. all, “Human larynx motor cortices coordinate Respiration for vocal-motor control,” *Neuroimage* 239 (2021), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1053811921006029>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

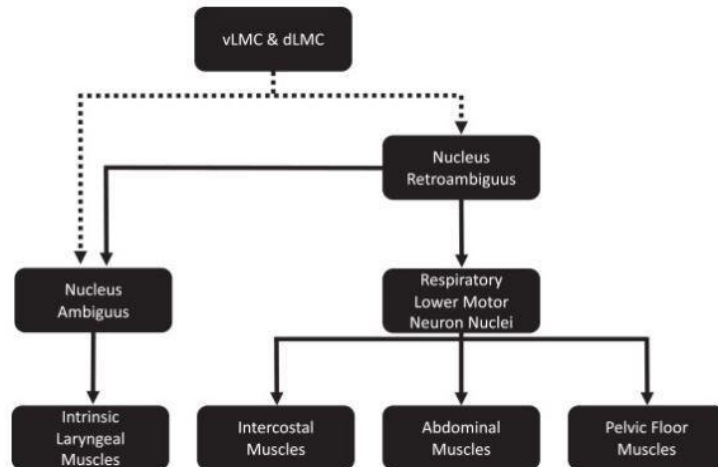


Figure 3: Flow chart function of the vLMC and dLMC.⁶¹

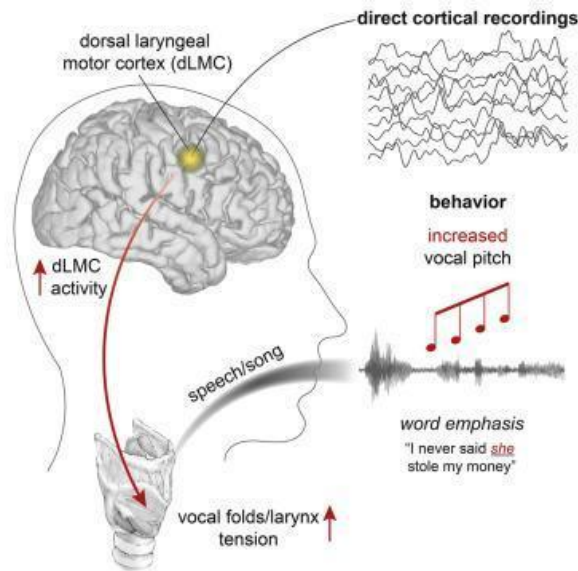


Figure 4: dLMC's involvement in vocalization.⁶²

In the sensory cortex, the laryngeal areas are close to the abdominal area and articulators. In the motor cortex, the dLMC is adjacent to the motor controls for the hands (see fig. 5 and 6).

⁶¹ Michel Beltyk, Rachel Brown, Deryk S. Beat, et. all, "Human larynx motor cortices coordinate Respiration for vocal-motor control," *Neuroimage* 239 (2021), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1053811921006029>.

⁶² Ibid.

In a 2020 blog post comparing the evolutionary vocal development between humans and songbirds, Dr. Heidi Moss writes “For humans, vocalization pathways are next to our limb control pathways. One can imagine, perhaps, that gestures are related to this closeness. Interestingly, researchers have found that singing helps Parkinson’s patients improve their gait: strengthening neural pathways in singing influences the controlling of their limbs.”⁶³ The association of the pieces of the motor cortex are reinforced in Andrew Byrne’s book, *The Singing Athlete: Brain-Based Training for Your Voice*. He explains, “the neck and hands are neighboring structures (to the larynx). If you take a video of yourself singing, you may see extraneous hand motions, and this close relationship may explain why... the neural pattern in singing is strongly correlated with an increase in the activation of the somatosensory cortex..”⁶⁴ An application of this phenomenon is in Ella Striem-Amit’s research on amputees, which demonstrates the proximity of the foot and mouth motor control areas to the hand area. The mouth and feet neural pathways can be used to help complete functions usually performed by hand.⁶⁵

⁶³ Heidi Moss, “Bird-Brained– What Birds Can Teach Us About Effective Singing Practice,” *The Naked Vocalist*, Feb 6, 2020, <https://www.thenakedvocalist.com/bird-brained-singing-practice/?fbclid=IwAR2c>.

⁶⁴ Andrew Byrne, *The Singing Athlete* (New York, NY: Andrew Byrne Studio Inc.): 2020.

⁶⁵ Ella Striem-Amit, “Brain Plasticity: When the Feet and Mouth Replace the Hand,” *Current Biology*, Elsevier Ltd., 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2017.03.057>.

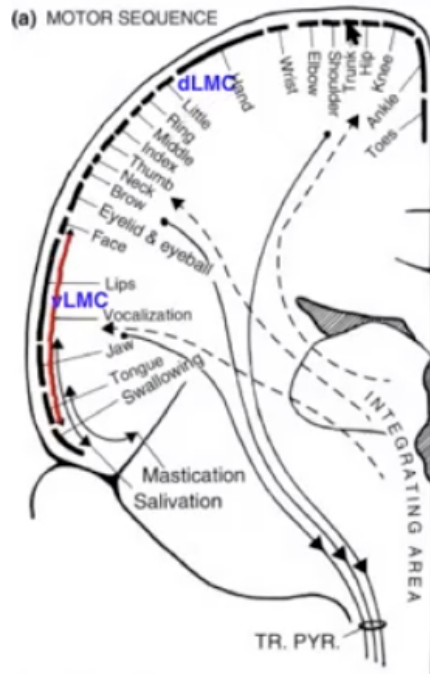


Figure 5: The proximity of the dLMC to the hand motor area.⁶⁶

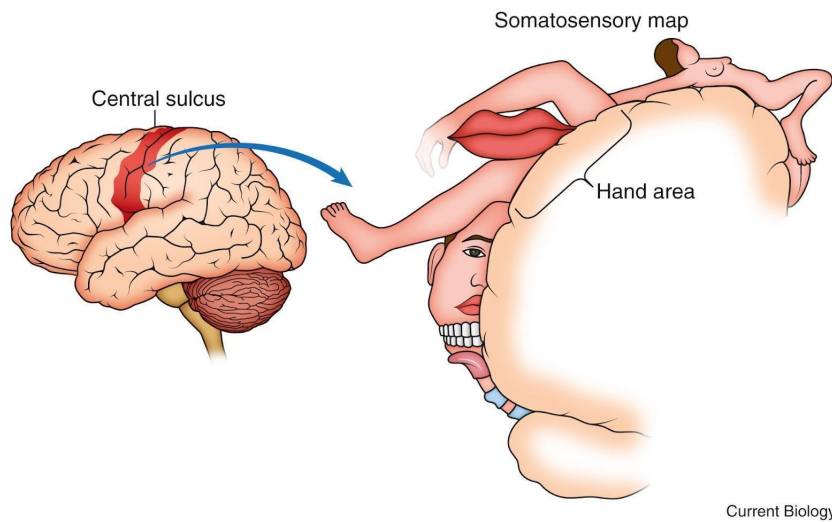


Figure 6: Visual representation of the proximity in the central sulcus.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Heidi Moss, “How Movement, Gestures, and Play can improve your Singing Practice,” Virtual Lecture, Nov 19, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=666133204063975>.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

In addition to research involving the larynx motor cortices and their relation to the areas that control the hands and feet, there are studies that use the knowledge in the field of music therapy when working with those with cognitive disabilities or brain injury. While music therapy is not directly related to vocal pedagogy, studies on neural connectivity contribute additional evidence that movement and music intersect in our brains, and we can use those connections to our advantage. An aspect of the neural connections between movement and music utilized as a part of music therapy is the “compulsion” to move. Humans are inclined to snap, tap feet, or bob heads to assist in processing rhythmic auditory stimulus. This furthers the theory of associationism, which Donald Hess cleverly broke down as “neurons that wire together, fire together.”⁶⁸ Compulsion to move to music is the basis of “Musical Viewpoints”, where singers would move as the music leads them.

Lynn Holding’s research on the human mirror neuron system reinforces this proposed method of preparation. She assesses a study conducted by neuroscientist Daniel Glaser, that observed the brain waves of dancers while watching different styles of dance, connecting it back to vocal pedagogy.⁶⁹ She argues that silent practice and listening are valuable tools when learning new repertoire. Listening to one’s own voice and responding with movement could not only stimulate brain activity the way Holding describes, but also provide a holistic approach to self-critique. As Holding mentions in her article, “The mind’s mirror”, the art beat science there, and the science is only beginning to catch up to reveal the mystery.⁷⁰ While some of the

⁶⁸ Donald Hess, “How Neurons that Wire Together Fire Together,” *Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research* (2021).

⁶⁹ Lynn Holding, “The mind’s mirrors,” *Journal of Singing* 66, no. 5 (2010).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

neuroscientific sources I found were dense and at times inconclusive, they unify on one key point: The brain functions as a unit coordinated by small regions that are not independent.⁷¹

Practical Implementation

With the neurological foundation and historical precedent established, why do hardly any classical voice undergraduate programs require movement-based acting courses? I discussed the current state of curricula with Corbin Abernathy, an interdisciplinary educator who, like me, strives to find the overlap in voice and acting with his pedagogy.⁷² He told me that when he was applying to schools in the 1990s, contacts at a University's music program told him he would get "all the acting he needed" in workshop productions to justify their lack of intensive acting curriculum. As a result, Abernathy switched to a drama degree and took music classes with his available credit hours. He explained how he constructs his teaching philosophy to address the discrepancy of movement and acting training in the field of vocal pedagogy. Abernathy described a phenomenon of separation between schools of music and drama, where music programs hire their own acting professors (if they have any), and drama programs hire their own voice teachers, as part of the probable cause. Although the crossover community is growing, and there have been strides forward towards increased collaboration, we are not there yet.

Another educator passionate about interdisciplinary training for singers is Sarah Wigly, who was hired at the University of Illinois in 2013 to create a crossover program.⁷³ When she was brought on to build the program, there was no precedent for a collegiate program with crossover curriculum scaffolding. In her program, there are still required music theory and

⁷¹ C. Lezama- Espinosa and H.L. Hernandez-Montiel, "Neuroscience of the auditory-motor system: How does sound interact with movement?" *Behavioral Brain Research* 384 (2020).

⁷² Corbin Abernathy, interviewed by Micah Patt, October 1, 2022.

⁷³ Sarah Wigly, interviewed by Micah Patt, October 31, 2022.

history courses as is the standard in B.M. Voice Performance programs, but students are required to take an acting for singers class and many take both classical and CCM lessons. All Lyric Theatre majors take a workshop class where they perform half musical theatre scenes and half opera scenes, focusing on the same goal of healthy vocalism and communicating onstage. While not all programs need this level of crossover, Wigly's program establishes that it is possible to alter the standard eight semester plan to create a well-rounded voice education for undergraduate singers.

As a B.F.A. Musical Theatre major who studied classical repertoire at my undergraduate program, I always felt a disconnect between my body and voice when switching over to art song. Despite classes in "musical theatre song and dance," which aimed to combine the two disciplines, whenever it was time to practice classical repertoire, my body and face seemed to shut off and solely focus on vocal technique. A part of this is certainly because musical theatre programs do not traditionally have foreign language diction classes, but also I had in my mind that for classical singing, technique is the only thing to perfect. When preparing for graduate school in Vocal Pedagogy in a classically-oriented program, I was prepared to have my expectations for the genre challenged, but was instead met with the realization that even in vocal performance programs, where students do receive significant diction training, there is rarely focus on connecting vocal technique to body awareness or emotional interpretation. I am not criticizing Syracuse University's program. It follows the standard set forth by the National Association of Schools of Music to remain accredited. Professors include units of somatic methods and emotional interpretation whenever it fits into their existing classes, there is an elective in Alexander Technique, and Setnor School of Music has allocated for an open ended course, "Special Topics in Voice Pedagogy", but the undergraduate curriculum remains rigid.

Syracuse University is not an anomaly. In the B.M. Voice Performance program at the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University, every single class in the eight semester plan with the exception of applied voice lessons entails sitting at a desk.⁷⁴ Out of fifty programs I researched, only 30% require one semester of acting, movement, or dance class, and only 13% require more than one class. Programs that are centered around opera are more likely to include this coursework, such as New York University, which requires two semesters of acting class and six credits of dance classes including modern, ballet, jazz, musical theatre, and baroque dance. In contrast, 100% of researched programs require more than one semester of music theory and music history. See figure 7 for the complete chart.

University	Semesters of Acting Class Required
Vanderbilt University Blair School of Music	0
Curtis Institute of Music	1
Eastman School of Music	0
Oberlin College Conservatory of Music	0
USC Thornton School of Music	1
Yale School of Music	0
New England Conservatory	4
Academy of Vocal Arts	0
University of Cincinnati College- Conservatory of Music	0
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music	0
The Julliard School	4
Boston University	0
Manhattan School of Music	1

⁷⁴ Vanderbilt University, “Voice Department,” Accessed October, 2021, <https://blair.vanderbilt.edu/departments/voice.php>.

Johns Hopkins University- Peabody Institute	0
Bard College and Conservatory of Music	0
Carnegie Mellon University	4
Northwestern University Bienen School of Music	0
University of Miami Frost School of Music	0
Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts	0
Berklee College of Music	0
Belmont University The Mike Curb School of Music	0
University of the Arts	0
Los Angeles College of Music	0
San Francisco Conservatory of Music	0
University of Michigan	0
University of Hartford	1
New York University Steinhardt	2
William Paterson University	0
The Catholic University of America	0
New Jersey City University	0
University of Louisville	0
University of Southern Alabama	0
University of Connecticut	0
Wichita State University	0
University of Missouri-Kansas City	1
University of New Hampshire	0
Roosevelt University	0
Texas State University	1
Boston Conservatory at Berklee	2
Colorado State University	0
Cal State LA	0
Rider University	3
Stephen F. Austin State University	0

Sam Houston State University	0
George Mason University	0
University of North Carolina Greensboro	1
Sacramento State	0
Texas A&M University	0
Ohio State University	0
Kansas University	0

Figure 7: Number of semesters of acting training required in B.M. vocal performance programs (based on public online curriculum break-downs).

In the long-term, NASM, the National Association for Schools of Music, should tighten their standards in regards to practical performance techniques in their requirements. NASM’s 2020-2021 hand book writes “to some extent, every musician functions regularly as a performer, listener, historian, composer, theorist, and teacher. Completion of an undergraduate program in music indicates acquisition of sufficient musicianship to perform these functions appropriate to the areas of concentration and to communicate effectively across the specializations of musical practice.”⁷⁵ While the handbook clarifies that the actualization of this education will vary at different institutions, how is it possible that universities without required performance training remain accredited? The broken down explanation of performance skills students must acquire on page 101 of the handbook explains:⁷⁶

- a. Technical skills requisite for artistic self-expression in at least one major performance

⁷⁵ “Handbook: 2020-2021,” National Association for Schools of Music, (Reston, VA: National Association of Schools of Music, 2021), 86, <https://nasm.arts-accredit.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/08/M-2020-21-Handbook-Final-08-10-2021.pdf>.

⁷⁶ “Handbook: 2020-2021,” National Association for Schools of Music, (Reston, VA: National Association of Schools of Music, 2021), 101, <https://nasm.arts-accredit.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/08/M-2020-21-Handbook-Final-08-10-2021.pdf>.

area at a level appropriate for the particular music concentration.

b. An overview understanding of the repertory in their major performance area and the ability to perform from a cross-section of that repertory.

c. The ability to read at sight with fluency demonstrating both general musicianship and, in the major performance area, a level of skill relevant to professional standards appropriate for the particular music concentration.

d. Knowledge and skills sufficient to work as a leader and in collaboration on matters of musical interpretation. Rehearsal and conducting skills are required as appropriate to the particular music concentration.

e. Keyboard competency.

f. Growth in artistry, technical skills, collaborative competency and knowledge of repertory through regular ensemble experiences. Ensembles should be varied both in size and nature.

The National Association for Schools of Music does not value movement or storytelling as a part of the “common body of knowledge and skills” under the “performance” category. The other five sectors prescribed to undergraduate music students are musicianship skills and analysis, composition/improvisation, history and repertory, and synthesis.⁷⁷ The lack of specificity is partially because NASM’s handbook does not differentiate requirements between instruments.

There are several updates in the 2021-2022 NASM Handbook which indicate that there is a level of awareness to the different needs of singers, as seen on page 105, which notes that vocal performance majors must study foreign language and diction.⁷⁸ It also includes requirements for Bachelor of Music in Musical Theatre, which specifies that students should reach “achievement of the highest possible level of performance as a singer-actor.”⁷⁹ Despite these alterations, there

⁷⁷ Ibid., 101-102.

⁷⁸ “Handbook: 2021-2022,” National Association for Schools of Music, (Reston, VA: National Association of Schools of Music, 2022), 105.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 118.

is still no listed necessity for acting training for voice performance students. Acting is not a genre-specific skill.

Because universities are not required to teach essential performance skills in order to remain accredited, they do not feel inclined to incorporate them into the curriculum, pushing them to the periphery of music education. NASM standards should be re-evaluated and updated to encourage changes at the university level. Donald Carpenter further assesses NASM's performance requirements in his dissertation, "Educating Theatrically Proficient Singers."⁸⁰ He critiques the current NASM requirement that 25-35% of a student's time should be spent in workshops and performing, recommending to decrease this load to balance out coursework demands. This suggestion could be especially helpful to first and second year students, and is the reason many B.F.A Musical Theatre programs do not permit underclassmen to perform in mainstage productions: they must spend their first two years focusing on classwork and training. Carpenter advises reducing requirements of participation in choral ensembles, which adds many hours of commitment often without the corresponding credit hours. Another possible solution is shifting courses from 4 years of music theory class and 4 of music history class to three years of both to make room for two years of acting.

Administrators may argue that adding or substituting additional coursework would be too much of a logistical hassle and would burn out students. Wigly recounted that in her journey to build the Lyric Theatre program, she was met with substantial push-back.⁸¹ What is the point of learning about the historical context or music theory if students do not also learn to apply that knowledge to their dramatic interpretation and performance practices? When taught

⁸⁰ Donald J. Carpenter, "Educating Theatrically Proficient Singers" (DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2018), 36-39, <https://libezproxy.syr.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/educating-theatrically-proficient-singers/docview/2042874469/se-2?accountid=14214..>

⁸¹ Sarah Wigly, interviewed by Micah Patt, October 31, 2022.

compassionately, movement-based acting classes serve a dual purpose of both teaching students to convey the needs of their character and the emotional intelligence to understand their own needs. Such coursework would not be an undue burden on students, rather the key to enhancing the rest of their undergraduate education. It is not an added bonus, but a key tool to unlock performance skills for young singers.

Some believe that the responsibility of educating classical voice students on acting techniques should fall on applied voice instructors. Although students are certainly developing and applying the theory, history, diction, and ear training skills from their other coursework in private voice lessons, all of these topics are a part of an assumed knowledge base that applied voice teachers use to enhance the technical training of the voice. They are not generally taught “from scratch” in voice lessons because it is assumed that students should be learning the information elsewhere. It is not the responsibility of private voice instructors to incorporate the materials of a whole acting class alongside their existing responsibilities of ensuring the singer is producing sound efficiently, healthily, and beautifully. Movement-based acting can be a portion of the focus of private lessons, however students should be just as capable of preparing their emotional interpretation as they are learning their notes and rhythms individually in a practice room. Additionally, as a current graduate student pursuing an M.M. in Vocal Pedagogy, there are no required acting classes in my curriculum, as is the norm in programs like mine. It would be irresponsible to put the weight of fully educating young singers about acting on teachers who have potentially never received formal training of their own.

If hired at a university and given the opportunity to teach an acting for singers course to undergraduate classical voice majors, I would use the following syllabus as a starting point. The

semester contains three sectors: “Musical Viewpoints” introduction supplemented by Balk readings, ensemble improvisation, and using Viewpoints to analyze art song style.

Acting for Singers

Course Description:

In this course, students will develop themselves as singer-actors through movement and vocal improvisation. Using Anne Bogart’s Viewpoints, H. Wesley Balk’s research, and Carol Kimball’s style analysis tools, students will learn to approach art song imaginatively and as storytellers.

Audience:

Undergraduate voice performance majors.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Students will develop vocal and physical freedom through movement and vocal improvisation.
- 2) Students will analyze and critique style elements of German, French, Italian, English, and American art song.
- 3) Students will emotionally connect to repertoire and understand the elements of storytelling as they apply to poetry in art song.

Required Texts/Supplies:

- *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition* by Anne Bogart.
- *The Complete Singer-Actor: Training for Music Theater* by H. Wesley Balk.
- *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* by Carol Kimball.

Grading:

Weekly journals and reading reflections	20%
Final reflection paper	20%
Participation and attendance	30%
Midterm performance	15%
Final performance	15%
 Total	 100%

Class Schedule

Week/Lecture	Topic	Required Reading/Assignment (Date Due)
Week 1	Class I: Syllabus Day, welcome games. Class II: What does it mean to be a singer-actor discussion, Uta Hagen activity.	Read the Syllabus. <i>The Complete Singer-Actor</i> , pg. 17-47. Reading Reflection Journal.
Week 2	Class I: Discuss reading, Viewpoints Day 1 (no music). Class II: Viewpoints Day 2 (no music).	<i>The Complete Singer-Actor</i> , pg. 51-65. Reading Reflection Journal.
Week 3	Class I: Discuss reading, Viewpoints Day 3 (no music) Class II: Viewpoints Day 4 (add music without specific style points)	<i>The Complete Singer-Actor</i> , pg. 82-100. Reading Reflection Journal.
Week 4	Class I: Discuss reading, Viewpoints Day 5 (add music with melody, harmony, rhythm). Class II: Viewpoints Day 6 (add music with rhythm, and instrumentation).	<i>Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature</i> “What is Style?”. Reading Reflection Journal. Style analysis sheet of a song in students’ repertoire.
Week 5	Class I: Viewpoints Day 7, everyone learns the same text and performs it with movement, masterclass coaching. Class II: Viewpoints Day 8 interpret the text with different settings.	Memorize “Come Away, Death” text. <i>The Complete Singer-Actor</i> , pg. 101-107 Reading Reflection Journal. Bring in an art song setting of “Come Away Death”.
Week 6	Class I: Discuss reading, Viewpoints Day 9, split into groups for midterm, introduce flocking and composition. Class II: Flocking and composition to music exploration Day 2. Select song for group (same song).	<i>The Viewpoints Book</i> , pg. 95-104. Reading Reflection Journal.

Week 7	<p>Class I: Present group performances (midterm) discuss what worked.</p> <p>Class II: Reading Discussion, introduce vocal improvisation & gibberish alongside movement improvisation.</p>	<p>Prepare group performance. Midterm Reflection Due.</p> <p><i>The Complete Singer-Actor</i>, pg. 114-116 Reading Reflection Journal.</p>
Week 8	<p>Class I: Balk improvisational exercises Day 1.</p> <p>Class II: Balk improvisational exercises Day 2.</p>	<p>No reading! Come excited to improv!</p>
Week 9	<p>Class I: Putting it all together. Reading discussion, personal practice application.</p> <p>Class II: Viewpoints composition with German Song.</p>	<p><i>The Viewpoints Book</i>, pg. 3-20. Reading Reflection Journal.</p>
Week 10	<p>Class I: Viewpoints composition with French Song.</p> <p>Class II: Viewpoints composition with Italian Song.</p>	<p>German Style Sheet Reflection due.</p> <p>French Style Sheet Reflection due.</p>
Week 11	<p>Class I: Viewpoints composition with English Song.</p> <p>Class II: Viewpoints composition with American Song.</p>	<p>Italian Style Sheet Reflection due.</p> <p>English Style Sheet Reflection due.</p>
Week 12	<p>Class I: Bonus composition day– Everyone brings in an art song to move to.</p> <p>Class II: Final Project work day.</p>	<p>American Style Sheet Reflection due.</p>
Week 13	<p>Class I: Final Performances</p>	<p>Begin work on the Final Performance: each</p>

	Class II: Final Performances	student selects an art song from their repertoire and performs it twice. Once moving to a recording of themselves singing, and once singing live using what they learned in the movement. Self-reflection paper due.
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Although there are outlets for training the singer-actor available to performers in the form of Baltz and Balk’s young artist programs, acting education for classical singers is still under-practiced in the university setting. Foundational acting and movement classes are instrumental in the emotional and technical development of young performers regardless of the medium. “Musical Viewpoints” is my compilation of researched practitioners into a structure that fits my teaching style and values. I highly encourage vocal pedagogues to further study any of the somatic methods discussed in this paper to inform their teaching.

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