

“THE SOUND OF MUSIC”

VOCAL EXECUTION IN THE MUSICAL THEATRE

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INTRODUCTION

The seminar constitutes a didactic run structured for the vocal execution in the Anglo-American Musical Theatre, through the formation of singers coming from every type of school or vocal kind. The project articulates on many historical, theoretical and practical sections concerning:

History and Theoretical Principles of Singing: From the beginning of the Italian "Scuola del Respiro" and from the reading of the first essay about singing, to the examination of the birth and the evolution of the Italian Bel Canto. We will treat the most important methods about singing and some among the styles of the World Music, underlining the connections with the fundamental principles of the Italian school.

We will come to treat the principles of the "Cantare Naturale" of M° Antonio Juvarra, concerning the creation of a "first sound" neutral and without any effort. We will speak about Overtones as the essential elements of the "colour" and of the "form" of the singing voice, with specific exercises who will amplify their perception.

We will analyze the rhythm as the fundamental element for the correct execution of the various styles and concepts like to be "uptempo" or "downtempo" compared to the beat. We will study how to sing in the choral and soloist dimension. We will finally examine the main characteristics of the two vocal dimensions underlining the differences during the execution.

The Practice of Singing: From the correct vocal warm-up beginning on the vocal center up to the main vocalizations to develop the agility of the vocal folds. We will proceed therefore to the study of the harmonic with specific exercises on the recognition and the production of "Overtones" with one and two forming. The important theme of the vocal hygiene will finally be treated, essential to maintain during the years the health of the vocal folds.

The Musical: We will analyze the birth of this genre as a natural pursuance of the "cultured" theatrical music, evolved from the musical experimentations on XIXth century. The works and the authors of the two "neuralgic sites" of the Musical Theatre (The London West End and Broadway) will be examined, and we will speak about the correct approach to the work, the study of the character beginning from his/her phonetic characterization, and the practice of singing during the Acting. We will watch repertoire selections and then we will proceed to practice a song selection from the most famous Musicals.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The primary goal of this seminar is the development of the vocal instrument knowledge starting from the basic theoretical principles up to the practical execution in the Musical Theatre, studying tunes from the most famous West End and Broadway shows. All the students will form one class during the theoretical lessons and the listening of the repertoire. Afterwards they will be divided according to their vocal extension (Bass/Baritone, Tenor, Alto/Belter, Soprano), to study soloist songs (second day, 1 song for each vocal tipology) and choral songs (third day, 2 quite difficult choral songs)

At the end of the concert, if asked, the teacher will run a concert with his personal pianist, featuring all the students

FIRST DAY: THE MUSICAL THEATRE

MORNING

- History and Development of the Musical Theatre from 1700 up to the present day
- Theatre and Movie path
- Broadway e West End: Two Faces of One Style
- Off Animation: Cartoon goes Musical

AFTERNOON

- One West End Composer among the others: Andrew Lloyd Webber / Boublil & Shoenberg
- One Broadway Composer among the others: Cole Porter / Irving Berlin
- Listening of the Repertoire

SECOND DAY: THE VOICE

MORNING

- History and Theoretical Principles of Singing
- Modern Methods for the vocal execution in the Musical Theatre
- Singing for the Actor
- Listening and analysis of soloist songs

AFTERNOON

- Focus on Bass/Baritone songs
- Focus on Tenor songs
- Focus on Alto/Belter songs
- Focus on Soprano songs

THIRD DAY: THE CHOIR

MORNING

- Vocal hygiene and warm-up
- Overtone Singing
- Global, personal and choral rhythm
- Listening and analysis of choral songs

AFTERNOON

- Focus on Choral Songs

(OPTIONAL) EVENING

- “Bianco e Nero” Concert (Stefano Brondi and Carlo Bosco) featuring all the seminar students

LESSON TOPICS

- **History and Singing Principles**

THE “SCUOLA ITALIANA” (lit. “Italian School”)

The Beginning: the “Scuola del Respiro” (lit. “School of Breathing”)

Roots: ‘500 – ‘600 Bel Canto

XVIIIth century Philosophy: Canto Illuminista

The first Singing Method: “Opinioni de’ Cantori Antichi e Moderni”

SINGING TODAY IN THE WORLD

Bel Canto and the Infinite Methods

Us: “Western School” main methods about Musical

Voicecraft E.V.T.S.

Singing and the Actor

Speech Level Singing

A “Global” singing style

Sounds from the World

Singing as a pure instrument without language

Overtones

Vocal Colors

Vocal Meditation

Sound Modeling and Transformation

Rhythm

Infinite ways to be “on tempo”

“Rhythm” as a synonym of “Style”

To be Up or Down Tempo

“Backbeat / Downbeat” and “Groove”

“Cantare Naturale” Principles

Antonio Juarra: biography e artistic path

The Three “pillars” of Cantare Naturale

The Posture

The Breathing

The Pronunciation

Sound Startup

Towards the feeling of the “Passaggio”

The development of the Resonance

The “Passaggio” or Air Support Device

The “sul fiato” (lit. “while breathing”) emission

- **Singing Practice**

VOCAL WARM-UP

Loosing of the Tensions

Vocal Center Formation

The “M” sound: Clearing the “Third Chakra”

Siren

Sound Startup

The Air gives birth to the Sound: The “Candle” Exercise

Vocal Colors: The “Cat” Exercise

Towards the Air/Sound Equilibrium

VOCAL HYGIENE

Improvement of the speech quality

Vocal rest

Maintenance of physical and mental health

The “Perfect Warm-up”: The ”Humming”

What NOT to do

Some little tips

Sleep

Environment

Alimentation

Smoking and Drugs

Alcohol

“Remedies”

Before: Erysimum Officinale and Thymus

During: Drink!

After: Arnica Montana

- **The Musical Theatre**

THE THEATRE PATH

History

From Opera to Musical Theatre
From Musical Theatre to Rock Opera
In Italy: Revue, Variety and Musical Comedy

The “Neuralgic sites”

West End
Broadway
Elsewhere in Europe: France e Germany

One Composer among all others (West End)

Andrew Lloyd Webber / Boublil & Shoenberg
Biography
Works

One Composer among all others (Broadway)

Cole Porter / Irving Berlin
Biography
Works

THE MOVIE PATH

History

The “Talkies”
From Theatre to the big screen
The Orchestral Soundtracks
Animation Movies

One Composer among all others

Howard Ashman & Alan Menken
Biography
Works

THE STUDY

First Approach to the tune

Character Study

Distinctive Vocal Styles
Phonetic marks

Singing and Communication

Acting

Several ways to study a song

HISTORICAL REPERTOIRE:

A selection of most beautiful scenes from Broadway and West End shows will be examined. Near each title there is a focus on its most important tunes, some of which will be part of the students repertoire during the individual and choral lessons. Hereafter the complete list:

- **FROM THE ROOTS TO THE "GAY NINETIES" (1728 – 1919)**

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA (1728)

Of all the simple things we do
Oh London is a fine town
South sea ballad

THE MERRY WIDOW (1905)

The merry widow waltz
Vilja
You'll find me at Maxim's

- **THE "ROARIN' TWENTIES" AND THE MUSICAL PROTOTYPES (1920 – 1942)**

SHOWBOAT (1927)

Ol' man river
Can't help loving dat man

PORGY AND BESS (1935)

Summertime
It ain't necessarily so
There's a boat dat's leavin' soon for New York

PAL JOEY (1940)

Bewitched, bothered and bewildered
I could write a book

- **THE GOLDEN AGE (1942 – 1968)**

OKLAHOMA! (1943)

Oh what a beautiful mornin'
People will say we're in love
The farmers and the cowmen

KISS ME KATE! (1948)

Always true in my fashion
I hate men
Too darn hot

SOUTH PACIFIC (1949)

Bali ha'i
Younger than springtime
Some enchanted evening

GUYS AND DOLLS (1950)

Guys and dolls
If I were a bell
Your eyes are the eyes of a woman/man in love

MY FAIR LADY (1956)
 With a little bit of luck
 Poor professor higgins
 On the streets where you live
 Show me
 Get me to the church on time
 WEST SIDE STORY (1957)
 Maria
 I Fell Pretty
 Tonight
 America
 THE SOUND OF MUSIC (1959)
 The sound of music
 Do-re-mi
 My favorite things
 FIDDLER ON THE ROOF (1964)
 Matchmaker, matchmaker
 If I were a rich man
 Do you love me?
 CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG (1964)
 Lovely lonely man
 Doll on a music box & Truly Scumptious
 Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
 CABARET (1966)
 Money
 Cabaret
 HAIR (1968)
 Aquarius
 Where do I go
 Let the Sunshine In

- **MEANWHILE... THE TALKIES GROW AS MUSICAL FILMS (1920 – 1959)**

SINGING IN THE RAIN (1952)
 Singing in the rain
 Good morning
 All I do is dream of you
 SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS
 Bless your beautiful hyde
 Wonderful day
 When you're in love
 Sobbin' women
 HIGH SOCIETY (1956)
 Who wants to be a millionaire
 You're sensational
 Now you has jazz

- **THE SEVENTIES: BIRTH OF THE ROCKOPERA (1969 – 1979)**

ORFEO 9 (1969) (Solo visione)

TOMMY (1969)

Pinball Wizard

Acid Queen

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR (1971)

Heaven on their minds

King's Herod song

I don't know how to love him

Simon Zealotes

- **LATELY ON BROADWAY (1970 – 1989)**

ANNIE (1976)

It's the hard knock life

Tomorrow

You're never fully dressed without a smile

A CHORUS LINE (1975)

One

What I did for love

I can do that

CHICAGO (1975)

All that jazz

Cell block tango

Me and my baby

- **LATELY OFF BROADWAY (1970 – 1989)**

GODSPELL (1971)

Save the people

Day by day

Turn back o man

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW (1973)

The time warp

Hot patootie

Touch-a touch-a touch-a touch me

THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (1982)

Downtown

Somewhere that's green

Feed me

Suddenly Seymour

- **WEST END STORY (ACCORDING TO ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER)**

EVITA (1978)

I'd be surprisingly Good for you

Don't Cry for me Argentina

High flying adored

CATS (1981)

Jellicle song for jellicle cats
Old Deuteronomy
Memory

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (1986)

The music of the night
Wishing you were somehow here again
Masquerade

- **WEST END STORY (ACCORDING TO THE OTHER COMPOSERS)**

LES MISERABLES (1985)

At the end of the day
On my own
What have I done

MISS SAIGON (1989)

Why God Why?
Sun and moon
Last night of the world

- **THE PRESENT DAY**

RENT (1996)

Seasons of love
Over the moon
I'll cover you
Rent

JEKYLL & HYDE (1997)

Façade
This is the moment
Sympathy, tenderness / Someone like you
In his eyes

SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS, COSTS AND CONCLUSIONS

SEMINAR NEEDS

- Projector or TV
- Acoustic Piano
- 4 microphones
- Mixer
- P.A. System for audio amplification

COSTS

The cost of the 3 days seminar (approx. 18 hours of lessons) is **600 euro** over VAT and all the accessory costs (flight, room and board for the seminar period).

The cost of the final concert featuring a pianist and all the students is **150 euro** over VAT and all the accessory cost (flight and one hotel night for the pianist).

CONCLUSIONS

One particular word for the world of the Musical Theatre. This particular theatrical style, built and sculptured through the past 3 centuries up till it became the actual form we all know, it's among us since the birth of civilization. It's the union between sound and action, between hearing and sight, between unvoiced motion and still music. A creative process that gave birth to the San Francesco's Sacre Rappresentazioni, Madrigals, Operas, Vaudevilles, Musical Revues, Operettas and, finally, to the Musical. A style who talked and sang about everything, for which the performers are expected (and must be prepared) to do everything, musically speaking. An ideal rendezvous of every vocal style, cause every style is necessary. A historical and stylistic meeting point with the roots of the Bel Canto and all the "Cultured" music. But, most of all, a way to perpetuate and immortalize the Opera Theatre, an all time testimony of the most beautiful stories, who is only waiting for (and urgently demands) a new story to tell.

APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM

STEFANO BRONDI (<http://www.stefanbrondi.com>)

- He studied Gospel Singing and Choir Direction with Rev. Nehemiah H. Brown; Pop Singing with Petra Magoni; vocal anthropology, vocality and vocal experimentation (diplofonies, triplofonies, vocal fry, sifflet and stripsody) with Albert Hera; Overtone Singing (Khoomej and Kargyraa) with M° Roberto Laneri; Choralty, Vocal Conducting, A Cappella Singing and Vocal Group Arranging with Andrea Figallo; Harmony and Composition with M° Roberto Sbolci
- He improved his studies and he's currently attending MasterClasses about "Cantare Naturale" under the guide of M° Juvarra
- He improved jazz singing techniques and vocal improvisation through methods and seminars with Bob Stoloff, Claude Gosset, Donna McElroy and Michelle Weir
- He studied Choral Conduction Techniques through methods and seminars with William Dehning, Russel Robinson e Jay Althouse.

Right now he's currently improving his Choral Conducting studies in Francoforte under the guide of Dr. Matthias Becker

- He studied acting at Centro Artistico "Il Grattacielo" with p. Valentino Davanzati and Claudio Monteleone
- He studied Modern and Jazz Dancing with Denise Storti and Ermonia Moscato
- He is a songwriter and a composer, and a former SIAE (Italian Authors and Editors Society) member

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (as singer)

- He was the singer of the rock band Viltudo, who played live at Pistoia Blues 2002 together with The Blues Brother Band, Dream Theater and B.B. King
- He performed major roles in Musicals like: "Little Shop of Horrors" (Compagnia Spazio Teatro - 2001), "Jesus Christ Superstar", "Music All", "Trentapercento" and "Pinocchio Superstar: storia di miracoli, uomini e burattini" (Compagnia Todomodo Music All - 2001/2007), "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" (Compagnia Rocco e i Suoi Orrori - 2001/2004)
- He has a major role on "Io Paolino Doppio Music Show" and the new production of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" Musical (Associazione Nido del Cuculo - 2006/2007)
- He leads the major role on the new Paolo Ruffini's Musical "80 voglia di te"
- He founded and directed from 2002 to 2006 "The Joyful Gospel Ensemble", for which he wrote musical and vocal arrangements too
- He created the show "Bianco e Nero - Musica per Immagini", 30 songs written in more than 200 years of music, from Mozart to Dream Theater, with the pianist Carlo Bosco and the painter Raffaele Commone
- He is the singer of the Valdera Jazz Big Band, who plays the greatest Swing Classics along with the most famous Sinatra songs
- He is the arranger and one of the member of "Daltrocanto" vocal group, active as Backing Vocal group for live and studio recording
- He is the voice of "Acquaforte" and "Malagrida" projects by Marco del Giudice, a meltin' pot of folk music with latin and jazz rhythms
- He is the singer of "Rat Pack - Tribute to Frank Sinatra", together with Nino "Swing" Pellegrini on Bass, Fabrizio Desideri on alto and tenor sax and clarinet, Matteo Fusaro on piano and Raffaele Commone on drums. The band try to retrace the life and the artistic career of "The Voice" through a historic repertoire of his greatest classic tunes

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (as teacher)

- He teaches Modern Singing and its application in Musical Theatre, Pop, Rock and Jazz according to M° Juvarra's Cantare Naturale principles and VoiceArt philosophy of Albert Hera
- He taught singing techniques at "Nuovisuoni" and "Centro Ricerca e Pratica Musicale Poerio" school
- He currently teaches at his private office and "Millenote" school
- He holded seminars on history and aesthetics of Musical Theatre and on vocal coaching for choirs and individuals at several music institutes and acting companies
- He followed as Vocal Coach the "Corso di Formazione sul Musical" music training course (2002) by c.a.g. Todomodo for which he personally trained the soloists of "Laboratorio Musical" show
- He teach Musical History and Aesthetic at the Goldoni Theatre, where he also direct the fourth section of the Treble Choir
- He followed and currently works as Vocal Coach for "Todomodo Music All" musical company (currently training soloists of "Pinocchio Superstar" show) and several italian singers