

## **Philosophy of Teaching**

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It is my responsibility to teach students to develop, and then rely on, their dramatic technique, self-confidence, and innate artistry as a singer-actor. I feel that instructing the student on stagecraft, character development, the use of movement in opera and musical theatre, always keeping in mind voice teacher-student vocal goals in my opera studio, is of primary importance. My knowledge of vocal physiology and use of that physiology is beneficial in the exchange of ideas with voice teachers on a student's development, primary challenges and successes in the opera workshop.

Singing and acting are communication. In order to express text and music, efficient use of the voice and truth in expression are goals for which we strive. I also believe that building self-confidence based on positive truths is essential. I often ask a student after they have performed an aria or a scene in rehearsal, "What do you like about what you did?" Though in the first few sessions, the student fights this line of thinking (usually by saying something like "NOTHING. I breathed in the wrong places, I forgot to cross left there...and...it was awful"), eventually he or she learns to look for those things done correctly. This, in a very positive way, teaches students how their successes can help to inform their challenges. I believe in teaching students how to teach themselves and psychologists universally agree that individuals accomplish more with high self-esteem than with self-loathing or doubt.

I strive to teach students to develop their own dramatic characters and interpretations of text. By drilling them in how to research a role, learn appropriate operatic style and rely on their own life experiences to bring a text to life, the student can develop true artistry.

Efficient use of the voice, building self-confidence and expression are the elements that truly encourage the continued "joy" of singing and acting. As a teacher and director of opera, my goal is to nurture that joy.