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MUSE 123.01: Techniques - Voice

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College of Visual and Performing Arts

MUSE 123

Techniques: Voice 1 Credit

Fall 2022

Dr. Katie E. Martin

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Office Location: 211

Office Hours: by appointment in person or virtual

Catalogue Description

MUSE 123 - Techniques: Voice. 1 Credit.

(R-2) Offered autumn. This course examines vocal function and issues associated with the physical processes of singing such as alignment, breathing, creating sound, and amplifying (resonating) sound. Additionally, students will learn basic information about becoming a voice teacher (or choral director). Students will also learn about singers' diction, voice classification, and the appropriate assigning of solo classical repertoire.

Gen Ed Attributes: Expressive Arts Course (A)

Course Description

This course is intended to introduce music education majors to the process of singing. Specific focus will be on vocal anatomy, critical listening, using one's own vocal instrument, and teaching techniques and strategies. Previous singing experience is not expected. Participants should expect a hands-on environment, including participating in singing vocal exercises (alone and together), learning vocal pieces, performing in front of the class, providing constructive feedback to peers, and discussing and interacting with course readings and materials.

Required Text and Materials

Text:

Rundus, Katherin. "Cantabile: A Manuel about Beautiful Singing for Singers, Teachers of Singing and Choral Conductors." Pavane Publishing (2016)

Additional Readings: Assigned either in the tentative schedule or on a TBA basis.

Materials:

-Notebook/Journal

-Binder for Music

-Pencil

-moodle (please let me know if you do not have access to the internet. We will make alternate arrangements.)

-A positive attitude. ☺

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to...

1. Describe basic vocal anatomy
2. Use descriptive adjectives to discuss a singing voice
3. Give constructive, relevant feedback to a singer
4. Diagnose vocal issues and provide solutions
5. Sing a song from memory in front of the class
6. Demonstrate knowledge of poetry and musical aspects of a vocal piece
7. Demonstrate a rudimentary understanding of IPA
8. Give a teaching demonstration in front of the class to one of their peers

Assignments

1. **Teaching Tools Journal.** Each student will keep a journal to be filled throughout the semester. The journal will contain strategies for diagnosing and applying solutions to the singing voice. An example might be the topic of breathing. The student will have a section in their notebook dedicated to breathing. They might write down a few of the basic anatomical points, and then some exercises/ideas on how to teach breathing. This is meant to be a tool that the student will keep with them for several years, adding to it as their knowledge of the voice grows. Dr. Martin will periodically collect journals throughout the semester.
2. **Readings.** Readings will be assigned via the syllabus and also TBA. All reading assignments are expected to be completed by the day given in class. You should look at the topics list and find the correlating readings listed so that you can proactively engage in these readings without formal instruction from the teacher.
3. Students will be expected to learn and perform two songs for class. One in English and the other in Italian. One song will be memorized and will be performed as part of teaching demonstrations. Students will all learn the same two songs, but it will be up to each individual which they choose to memorize. Regular practice will be expected.
4. **Teaching Demonstration.** You will be asked to give a master-class style teaching demonstration during class. (See the Tentative Schedule.) You will give feedback to one of your peers, as would be done in the typical master-class setting.
5. **Critical Listening.** Critical listening assignments will be assigned on moodle and also conducted in class. You will be asked to watch/listen to the given example and provided your thoughts and feedback. Remember, critical listening should include: descriptive adjectives (what does the voice sound like), what the voice does well, how the voice could improve, and at least two suggestions on how to improve it.

Assessments

You will not have a formal 'test' in this class. Rather, the expectation is that you robustly participate in the above assignments. You will be required to do 'check-in's.' A check in will be done via moodle. You will tell me how you are doing in class, what kind of effort you are putting in to the class, and what you think your grade should be. You will also tell me if there are areas you feel needs more clarification or areas in which you are struggling.

Your final exam will consist of three items: 1. singing a song for the class. 2. Doing 'master class' style teaching (to be explained) and 3. Doing a final check in and grade justification (see below in grading.) You must participate in the final in order to receive a passing grade.

Grading

Grading in this class will look different from many of your other classes. You will be permitted to assign yourself your own grade on the following conditions:

1. You complete all check-ins
2. You sing one of the two required songs at the final
3. You participate in the 'master class' component of the final
4. You submit a written justification of your final grade by the given date and time (no exceptions).
5. You treat your classmates and teacher with respect, dignity and kindness.

Why this style of grading? I have found that many of us become so focused on the need to churn out assignments and cram for tests to get a good grade that we lose sight of what really matters in the class. In this class, I want you to focus on improving your singing voice, improving your listening ears, and improving your knowledge of the human instrument. As budding professionals, you should value the classes you are taking because they will aid you in your future fields of employment. It is your choice to soak in this time and get everything you can. My only grading stipulation, aside from those listed above, is that I am permitted to raise your grade if I feel you have under-valued your performance in the class. So please, dig in to the information and reach a higher level of understanding and application than simply cramming for a test or rushing through a reading or assignment. You are worth it!

Learner Focused Education

In this class we will engage in both 'traditional' style of teaching (lecture style) and also learner style. Learner style education is a more inclusive educational modality where students take more ownership over the educational process. For example—you may break off into small groups to assess each-other's singing. You might engage in a class-lead discussion about a vocal recording we listen to and help each other discover different methods of tackling the voice. In these cases the teacher facilitates the learning by helping to lead the discussion, make relevant topic suggestions, and guide towards resources to help with discovery of information. As we become more familiar with the voice you will all become more equipped to handle learner-centered, learner style discussion. Think application, sharing of information, and being able to discover new information and apply it right away.

OTHER POLICIES

Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php."

Disability Statement

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation.

Classroom Policies

Students must adhere to the use of technology only as directed by the professor or for note-taking purposes. The inappropriate use of technology (cell phones, iPods, tablets, laptops, computers, etc.) in the classroom is not tolerated.

There will be no use of computers, tablets, or cell phones for texting, personal entertaining, or other social media-related activities in the classroom. If an emergency exists and the student needs to be able to receive texts while in class, notify Dr. Martin prior to the beginning of class.

Topic Overview

How to practice and how to learn a song

Performance Anxiety and Behavioral Therapy (simple intervention techniques and valuing yours and other's feelings)

Reading Hand-Out

Critical Listening

Instrument Alignment and Positioning

Rundus Chapter 1 and 2

Breath

Rundus Chapter 3

Larynx

Rundus Chapter 4

Resonators

Rundus Chapter 5

Rundus Chapter 6

Rundus Chapter 7

Articulation and Musical Expressiveness, Communication

Rundus Chapter 8

Rundus Chapter 9

Vocal Health

Master Class Teaching

Singing and Performing

International Phonetic Alphabet

Final Exam:

Monday December 12th 10:10-12:10

-Please be sure to reserve this time for in-class performances and master-class teaching demonstrations. You must attend and participate in the final in order to grade yourself. Your final exam written grade justification will need to be turned in on Moodle by 11:59 Monday evening on December the 12th in order to be counted. If these stipulations are not met you lose your privilege to give yourself a grade. **You must participate in the final in order to pass the class.**