

Bridging Vocal Technique and Creative Musical Expression Through Improvisation

Singers:

- Learn ways to explore and expand present vocal abilities**
- Feel how expressive movement can harness musicality and voice**
- Listen more deeply, which cultivates existing innate musicality**
- Discover what it is to sing with clear musical and emotional intention**
- Engage in activities that further develop musicianship skills**
- Sing with more confidence and self-reliance**
- Mindfully interact and make music with others**

The aim of this workshop is to allow singers to explore the process behind expressive and technically sound vocal performance. This is achieved through guided activities that combine movement and vocal improvisation. Vocal improvisation provides the time, space and freedom that enables participants to: focus on, explore and expand their singing abilities; develop awareness of how they use their entire body or “instrument” as they perform; and, learn about mindful, focused listening and the power of intention. As participants begin to use their intuition, senses, and instincts to make music in the moment, they gain musical insights that enhance score reading and role preparation. Improvising with others as part of an ensemble increases self-confidence, mindfulness of others, and stage presence. Singers begin to communicate more effectively and sing with an empowering sense of self-reliance. Here is the bonus: vocal improvisation can be really fun.

My holistic approach is built upon study of the art of improvisation as taught by Music For People (David Darling, Mary Knysh, et. al musicforpeople.org), vocology (the science and habilitation of the singing voice), neuromuscular re-education through somatology, mindfulness through yoga, and Performance Wellness (Dr. Louise Montello).

Frequently Asked Questions:

Is it true that anyone can learn how to improvise? Yes, what most of us lack is experience and knowing how to the practice.

Can improvising interfere with vocal technique? At first, it may feel like it does, but singers quickly discover that improvisation enhances vocal technique. Improvisation develops deep inner listening (audiation), an essential part of vocal technique that is often overlooked (think about how you sing in ear training classes and how that differs from the way you sing in lessons and concerts...). Improvisation allows you to explore and apply vocal techniques you are learning.

Isn't improvising with a group of singers a scary experience? Yes, it can be at first, but once you realize there are "no wrong notes" you will experience how liberating, empowering and creative it can be. Improvising with others also teaches you how to listen to, and interact with others. This kind of musical communication builds ensemble skills, group synergy and teamwork.

Can I practice improvisation on my own? Absolutely! You will be provided with ideas that you can take home and play with.