

You should be practicing at least 4 hours for every 1 hour lesson.

In the Practice Room

Learning how to practice efficiently and enjoyably is a VITAL part of your work as a singer. I expect the lesson to assist you in learning how to focus on specific tasks, and I expect that you will guide yourself through the methods that you learn in the lesson, maintaining that systematic structure for practice time.

The following concept is the most important part of my philosophy of practice, and I hope it will inform all of your specific tasks:

YOU LEARN HOW TO DO SOMETHING WELL BY MAKING CORRECT REPETITIONS

Two or more brief sessions per day are far preferable to one long session. Beginning students should not practice more than twenty minutes at a time. Advanced students should not practice more than forty.

The following concept is the most important part of my philosophy of learning a song, and I hope it will inform all of your specific tasks:

THE COMPOSER EXPECTS YOU TO BRING LINGUISTIC AND EMOTIONAL INTERPRETATION TO THE SONG

Reciting the text should be a regular and frequent preparation to singing. You must be able to recognize and communicate the consonance/dissonance between spoken word stress and the stress chosen by the composer.

Please use these criteria as you work:

- 1) What are you singing about?
- 2) What clues are given by the composer?
- 3) What might be present in performance practice that is not on the page?
- 4) What is possible for you at this point in your development.

Remember that much of your work will be non-singing: preceding your actual singing time: Translating, researching the style and related information, studying other works of the same composer... Even if you're unable to practice singing, you can still do important work.

Develop a KEY: a list of aesthetics and methods written in a way that is meaningful and helpful to you. Keep a LOG: a record of events in your practice time. Share both with me regularly.

KEY

Start from the BIG PICTURE or the DETAILS

Either

Create a list of every skill you need to make music/sing/perform, then Organize the list into categories that are useful to you,

Or

List the categories in which you want your performance to be successful, then give the categories specificity by listing each skill that contributes to the goal.

Define methods for achieving each skill

This document will evolve as you do

Your diligence and skill in updating the document will likely mirror your evolving abilities as a musician/singer/performer

Following is a basic list that may be helpful to you as you define the qualities of singing:

Technique

breathing
posture
jaw/face/tongue
fioratura
vibrato

Vocal Tone

clarity
resonance
intonation
timbre

Diction

comprehension
consonants
vowels
inflection
fluency

Musicianship

pitch and rhythm accuracy
dynamics
phrasing
articulation
memorization
appropriate style

Overall Performance

appropriateness of music
interpretation
appearance
vitality
stage presence

What is the aesthetic of each quality listed? What do YOU do to achieve each of these qualities? Do these qualities overlap in category? Do some qualities belong in other categories?

LOG

Keep a daily log of your practice times and activities
Identify events as specifically as is useful to self and PM
Clarify, define, discuss routines with PM during lesson
Logs may also be used for narrative, if this is effective for you

Logs should be assessed for:

Regularity of entry
Specificity of events
Correlation to demonstrated improvement in singing
Usefulness!

SAMPLE PRACTICE LOG

A=Aesthetic

M=Method

Date_____ Time_____

Subject_____

A _____

M_____

Date _____ Time _____
Subject _____

A _____

M _____

Date _____ Time _____
Subject _____

A _____

M _____

Date _____ Time _____
Subject _____