

S.C.V.A. NEWS

Southern California Vocal Association February, 2015

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Rodger Guerrero

Is it just me, or does it seem tough to get the most out of our singers at this time of the year? Maybe it's the "Post-Holiday Blah Syndrome" or simply that the singers are used to (and bored by) my teaching style. Whatever the case may be, I find that I must spend a larger amount of time motivating students during the second semester than the first. **Motivation is the key, right?** Research confirms that it can determine musical success as well as a musician's ability to cope with failure. In their chapter on **Motivation** in *The Science and Psychology of Music Performance* (Parncutt & McPherson, 2002), Susan A. O'Neill and Gary E. McPherson contend that **motivation** is "an integral part of learning that assists students to acquire the range of behaviors that will provide them with the best chance of reaching their full potential." (O'Neill & McPherson, p. 31). If this is true, how can we structure our rehearsals and **motivate** our students in order to encourage growth in our students' **self-motivation**?

1. Rehearsals must be malleable in order for them to remain in a constant state of "flow."

Flow Theory "suggests that [an] optimal [rehearsal] experience requires a balance between roughly equal levels of perceived challenge and skill in a situation that involves intense concentration" (O'Neill & McPherson, p. 35). No matter what our rehearsal plan involves, we can **motivate** our singers by balancing musical challenges with their skill levels. If the music (or what we require from them) is too easy for their skill sets, they will become bored. Conversely, if the music (or what we require from them) is too difficult for their skill sets, they will experience severe anxiety. If both skill levels and challenges are low, our singers will become apathetic. Here's the rub: the complexity of our rehearsal activities must continually change in order to reflect the change in our singers' skills as they learn and improve. Thus, what seemed challenging in October is too easy for them now. While our February rehearsal strategies and activities must scaffold off of what we planned in September, they must look completely different. No matter what we plan, our daily and long term goals must be clear, our feedback must always be honest, and the outcomes we require of our students must always seem like they are within their control. In malleable rehearsals, the singers lose their self-awareness because the musical experience becomes intrinsically rewarding, and time definitely begins to fly by!

2. Continual, honest, constructive feedback is essential throughout every rehearsal, especially with beginning and intermediate ensembles.

Intrinsic motivation is what we want from our students, and in the choral rehearsal, our students must value the music (Hello: literature selection matters!) as well as the music-making experience in order to become **self-motivated**. This necessitates continual, supportive (not callous), realistic, and varied feedback from multiple sources (theirs and ours). Feedback can be technology-based: rehearsal video recordings, in-rehearsal text-partners, or emails comparing and contrasting recordings. Feedback can be journal-based: many students feel empowered when they are able to write down what they feel. Feedback can be narrative-based: but let the students lead and guide the conversation so that they come up with new rehearsal strategies. Whatever the case, honest, recurrent feedback enables the students to feel that they have mastery over their learning. They will exemplify "*persistence following failure and appear to enjoy exerting effort in the pursuit of task mastery*" (O'Neill & McPherson, p. 38). The necessity to share constant, constructive feedback is magnified when working with singers who perceive that they lack the musical skill sets necessary to perform well. We must continually remind them that we believe that they possess the potential to achieve. They must understand that our clear expectations of them reflect our desire to stretch their abilities and capably handle the musical challenges we present them with.

Motivation throughout rehearsals is definitely the key. How we **motivate** our singers influences how they **motivate** themselves. It colors how they evaluate themselves as well as what they attribute their successes and failures to. It contributes to the enjoyment they feel when they make music. The more they enjoy it, the more intensely and effectively they rehearse. And the better they rehearse, the more **motivated** we become, right?

Vocal Solo/Small Ensemble Competition

Marisa Rawlins Bradfield, VP-Vocal Solo



Vocal Solo and Small Ensemble Competition

New Preliminary Date Addition

Happy New Year! Before you know it, we'll be preparing for graduation! The month of January has been very active with our preliminary round for the Vocal Solo and Small Ensemble Competition. I am pleased to announce that SCVA will be adding an additional date on February 28th at Providence High School in the city of Burbank. If you were interested in having your students participate, I would encourage registering as soon as possible. We expect this site to fill at maximum capacity.

Competition Finals: Saturday, March 14th @ 5:00pm

Venue TBA

Eligibility and Guidelines

- All registrations must have director approval.
- Directors or voice teachers must be current SCVA members.
- When performing in an ensemble, only one vocalist per part will be allowed.
- All solo performances must be accompanied.
- All performers must supply their own accompanist.
- All solo performances must be memorized. Ensemble performances may choose to perform with scores.
- To be eligible for the vocal solo competition, students must perform a classical music solo. A selection from the 26 Italian art song book, or equivalent is recommended. For the competition, selections from the musical theatre genre are not acceptable.
- To be eligible for a rating, students must perform a solo or an ensemble piece from the classical or musical theatre genre.
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How do I explain the registration process to my student?

- Register a solo or ensemble for a festival www.scvachoral.org
- Select the performance category (Competitive, non-competitive, rating or comments)
- Pay the registration fee - \$25 for solo, and \$35 for small ensembles online

SCVA applicants who earn a Superior rating will be invited to the CMEA State Solo and Small Ensemble Festival.

Online Application and Payment Deadline

Friday, February 13th

Registration is only available online

For further questions and information:

Please email me at marisa.bradfield@providencehigh.org



Show Choir Spectacular!

Patty Breitag – VP, Show Choirs



HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION TO ATTEND:

- Applications are on line at: SCVACHoral.org
- All choirs are welcome no matter what level
- There are two ways to pay
 - School or booster check made out to SCVA
 - Through the SCVA website PayPal account.
- Please plan on plenty of time to arrive
- Spectators are welcome to attend
 - Tickets will be sold at the box office for \$5.00
- Prepare a program that is between 10 and 17 minutes in length.
- Try to add variety to your show by performing different music styles
 - At least three songs should be choreographed
- An A Cappella number is required.
- Costumes do not have to be extravagant – just look attractive on stage!
 - Costume changes are not necessary to have a successful show
- Bring a lighting form with you that contains light cues
 - The lighting form will be sent with all final documents
- Live band is always preferred but CD accompaniment is also acceptable.
 - Please no phone accompaniments!
 - Transfer (format) all accompaniment tracks onto a CD
 - If you use a CD, you must have a person sit with the sound technician to help with any cues that are necessary (when to start the next song or where to stop for the a cappella number etc.)
- Groups must be in their assigned theatre seats for all groups in their division
 - It is important to remember that we all need an audience!
 - We should all be there in support of every groups efforts
 - It's always inspiring to see what other schools are doing
 - Our adjudicators are Show Choir experts with years in the class room in addition to being veterans of show choir adjudication

If you know of a school that has a show choir that may not be aware of this event, invite them to check it out. The SCVA Spectacular is the final show choir competition of every year in Southern California. We hope that you will add this competition your scheduled events in 2015.

For more information, direct all of your emails to:
Patty Breitag, SCVA Vice President of Show Choirs at: pjbairhart@aol.com

March 1 Festival Registration Deadline as Inevitable as



Nancy Ludwig and Melva Morrison, Festival VPs

I recently attended a district training specific to the Performing Arts areas with regards to incorporating Common Core into our classrooms, and was taken aback when the facilitator looked at all of us and said, "The good news is that you've all been doing Common Core for years and everyone else needs to catch up!" Having already realized this ourselves, many of us felt quite vindicated. However, it caused me to ponder whether this realization was felt district-wide by administration, or was simply an 'aha!' moment for these particular Instructional Coaches.

Regardless of how supportive our administrations may or may not be, it is our responsibility to advocate for our programs and have a constant presence on campus. We are truly the only ones who fully understand how valuable our programs are, but now we have ammunition! While we groan under the mandate of Common Core, we can actually rejoice, because yes, as music educators....WE have been doing this all along!

Anytime we ask our students to analyze a performance they heard, or self-evaluate their own performance, they are developing critical thinking skills. This is at the essence of Common Core! We can all use this to our advantage when taking our ensembles to festivals.

For those of you who have difficulty getting your administration to support taking students to choral festivals, this is what you have been waiting for! Try using 'Common Core' as the buzz word it is, and advocate for your program. Share with your administrators what students can gain from attending a festival, and how it is not only about what the adjudicators say about the performance or the rating, but also what the singers discover through self-evaluation and observations of other ensembles. While this is not a guarantee, using Common Core to educate our administrators about the value of festival participation will at least place you on their radar as an educator that values developing young minds for the long term, and not just for a rating on a plaque in your room.

As of right now we have nearly 350 ensembles registered to attend an SCVA Festival, which is very exciting, however the deadline is looming! March 1 will be the last day to register for a festival. Don't miss this opportunity to advocate for your program and turn a national mandate to your students' advantage!

Take THAT Common Core!

- The deadline to register for a festival is March 1, 2015
- The cost per choir for each regular festival is \$100, and festivals with sight-singing are \$130.
- You may access the online registration form at <http://www.scvachoral.org/festivals.php>.

Questions? Contact Nancy Ludwig or Melva Morrison. You may also visit the FAQ page at: http://www.scvachoral.org/festival_faq.html.

The following festivals are still available as of 1/25/15:

Junior High/Middle School Festivals

Day	Date	Time	Site	City	Level	Type	Host
Fri	3/13	9:30am	Shivela MS	Murrieta	Open	Clinic	Lavinia Tikasingh
Thurs	3/19	11:00am	Venice HS	Los Angeles	Open	Open	Wendy Sarnoff
Tues	3/24	9:00am	Menifee Valley MS	Menifee	Open	Open	Tom Oliver
Tues	3/24	12:00pm	Menifee Valley MS	Menifee	Open	Open	Tom Oliver
Tues	4/14	9:00am	James L. Day MS	Temecula	Open	Open	Patricia Halic
Tues	4/14	1:00pm	James L. Day MS	Temecula	Open	Open	Patricia Halic
Tues	4/21	10:00am	Las Flores MS	Las Flores	Open	Open	Elena Benefield
Thurs	5/07	10:00am	Oak MS	Los Alamitos	Open	Open	Rachelle Randeem
Fri	5/08	10:00am	Oak MS	Los Alamitos	Open	Open	Rachelle Randeem
Fri	5/08	1:00pm	Ramirez Intermediate School	Eastvale	Novice	Clinic	Kyle Betts
Wed	5/13	10:00am	Bernardo Yorba MS	Yorba Linda	Open	Open	Linda Nason
Fri	5/15	1:00pm	Segerstrom HS	Santa Ana	Open	Open	Greg Ellis
Thurs	5/21	10:00am	William and Jane Bristol Civic Auditorium	Bellflower	Open	Open	Jae Shu

High School Festivals

Day	Date	Time	Site	City	Level	Type	Host
Mon	3/02	3:30pm	Del Norte HS	San Diego	Open	Open	Keith Sattely
Thurs	3/05	9:00am	Chaparral HS	Temecula	Open	Open	Rob Hodo
Wed	3/11	10:00am	Bloomington HS	Bloomington	Open	Open	Ryan Duckworth
Wed	3/11	2:00pm	Montebello HS	Montebello	Open	Open	Jessie Flasschoen
Thurs	3/19	6:30 PM	Venice HS	Los Angeles	Open	Open	Wendy Sarnoff
Tues	3/24	7:30 pm	Harvard-Westlake School SIGHTREADING	Studio City	Adv	Chamber	Rodger Guerrero
Thurs	3/26	4:00pm	Golden Valley HS	Santa Clarita	Open	Open	Kerry Riccio Aguero
Tues	3/31	10:00am	Baldwin Park PAC	Baldwin Park	Novice	Open	Suzanne Brookey
Tues	3/31	3:30pm	Baldwin Park PAC	Baldwin Park	Adv	Chamber	Suzanne Brookey
Wed	4/01	9:30am	Beckman HS SIGHTREADING	Irvine	Adv	Mixed	Nancy Stuck
Wed	4/01	10:00am	Rosemead HS	Rosemead	Open	Open	Ruth Gray
Wed	4/01	4:00pm	Rosemead HS	Rosemead	Open	Open	Ruth Gray
Thurs	4/02	10:00am	Placentia-Yorba Linda USD PAC	Placentia	Open	Women's	Michael Fenton
Thurs	4/02	1:00pm	Placentia-Yorba Linda USD PAC	Placentia	Open	Mixed	Michael Fenton
Thurs	4/02	5:00pm	Walnut HS	Walnut	Open	Open	Elizabeth Lopez
Tues	4/07	6:00pm	Knight HS	Palmdale	Open	Open	Suzanne McGarraugh
Wed	4/08	9:00am	CSUSB Recital Hall	San Bernadino	Adv	Open	John Russell
Thurs	4/09	10:00am	Beaumont HS	Beaumont	Novice	Open	John Fieldhouse
Tues	4/14	7:00pm	Eastlake HS	Chula Vista	Open	Open	Joseph DeMers
Wed	4/15	10:00am	Segerstrom HS	Santa Ana	Open	Men's	Grace Han
Tues	4/21	6:00pm	Mark Keppel HS	Alhambra	Open	Open	Tony Azeltine
Wed	4/22	10:00am	Westridge School	Pasadena	Open	Open	Paul Stephenson
Wed	4/22	1:00pm	Murrieta Mesa HS SIGHTREADING	Murrieta	Adv	Clinic	Jeffrey Kopasz
Tues	4/28	9:30am	Marshall Fundamental School	Pasadena	Open	Open	David Pitts
Tues	4/28	7:00pm	Thacher School	Ojai	Open	Open	Bill Wagner
Thurs	4/30	2:00pm	El Monte HS	El Monte	Open	Open	Joel Whisler
Mon	5/18	7:00pm	West HS	Torrance	Open	Open	Kathleen Jensen
Thurs	5/21	1:00pm	William and Jane Bristol Auditorium	Bellflower	Open	Open	Carolyn Kelley

Improvisation in the classroom – Roger Treece’s take on Circle Singing

Christine Tavares-Mocha, SCVA Vocal Jazz Representative

Like most choral directors, when we receive our degree in music, we’ve learned the standard 24 Italian Arias (what I like to fondly call the Classical Fake Book), we’ve taken diction, solfegge, and we are armed with great vocal health pedagogy. This helps set a foundation for our teaching, but in many ways it falls short of what is expected of us. As choral directors, we are now responsible to run programs that have a cappella groups, vocal jazz groups, show choirs, and musical theatre showcases. Why are we responsible? Because, offering these popular styles in our education will make our program grow! It will make us grow as educators! And after all the work is done, it will allow you to enjoy your teaching even more...because it’s FUN!

Roger Treece circle sings with students at the Jazz Education Network Conference, Jan. 2015



Improvisation can be a daunting task for some of us, however it doesn’t have to be. There are great tools out there to help you reach your goals as an educator and to help your students become better improvisers. Why is it important to become a better improviser? Improvisation focuses listening, breath support, and overall improves vocal intonation. It helps students understand that music can be created/discovered and gives them personal responsibility over that creativity. (Hint, did someone say common core?)

One beginning exercise for any choral director who would like to introduce improvisation in the classroom is circle singing. “Circle Singing” begins with the conductor (could be a student or director) in the middle conducting different sections. For beginning purposes, these groups can be broken down into four parts, SATB. The conductor then creates a phrase that one section sings until that section is comfortable within the groove. The conductor then turns and adds other phrases to each section by “discovering” what new phrase compliments the original phrase. The key is – there is no right phrase, but to focus on listening within the group and to discover the phrase through the creative process. A student then can “become” the conductor and begin creating within the sections.

In Roger Treece’s new book, “Circle Songs,” he breaks down the creative process into three principles;

Exploration -----> Discovery -----> Definition

To explore means to experiment with rhythms, melodic shapes, or phrases. It's best to find ideas by exploring, rather than by contriving. Explore until you "discover" an idea, then "define" that idea and give it to the choir. – Roger Treece

Roger Treece has now published a book, with listening examples and loops to begin exploring improvisation within your classroom called "Circle Songs; the Method." For more information or to purchase, visit <http://www.rogertreece.com/books-scores>

Congratulations to the 2015 Calif. All State Vocal Jazz Choir

<i>Vocalist</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Director</i>
Korri Bradley	Enterprise High School	Alissa Aune
Andrea Cliscagne	Heritage High School	Steve Earnest
Shanti Herzog	Enterprise High School	Alissa Aune
Kendra Laguilles	Valencia High School	Christine Tavares-Mocha
Katelyn Ault	Enterprise High School	Alissa Aune
Alondra Gonzalez	Folsom High School	Curtis Gaesser
Rachel Khuc	Piedmont Hills High School	Myles Ellis
Justin Barton	Enterprise High School	Alissa Aune
Carl Hatch	Long Beach Polytechnic H.S.	Brian Dokko
Tanner Ming	Valencia High School	Christine Tavares-Mocha
Jeremy Adler	Palos Verdes High School	Shellie Parkinson
Cole Wersky	Folsom High School	Curtis Gaesser
Nicholas Tasker	Valencia High School	Christine Tavares-Mocha



Congratulations to the California All State Vocal Jazz Choir and their directors! February 18-20, selected students will participate in a 3-day rehearsal extravaganza with Jennifer Barnes, director of Vocal Jazz Studies at University of North Texas at the CASMEC Convention. Among the Choral Leadership Academy and many clinics being offered, the CASMEC convention offers nightly performances of the varying California All State Ensembles. **The Calif. All State Vocal Jazz Choir performance is February 20th at 8pm in the Saroyan Theater, Fresno California.** For more information on this performance and the CASMEC Convention, go to the California Band Directors Association website, www.cbda.org

Southern California Vocal Association

Harvard-West-Lake Upper School

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IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

SCVA Festival Registration Continues	Deadline March 1, 2015
Diva Day	February 7, 2015
Young Men's Harmony Festival	February 21, 2015
ACDA National Conference	February 25 – 28, 2015
SCVA Vocal Jazz Festival	March 13, 2015
Junior High Honor Choir Regional Rehearsal	March 14, 2015
Junior High Honor Choir Regional Rehearsal	March 21, 2015
California All-State High School Honor Choirs	March 26 - 28, 2015
Junior High Honor Choir Rehearsal & Concert	April 25, 2015
Show Choir Spectacular	May 2, 2015