

## **FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK**

Dear Members,

It is an invigorating time to be part of the Canadian Voice Care Foundation! We are so happy to once again be running at full steam and providing help to all occupational and professional voice users. My sabbatical following the 1999 conference provided me with new energy and determination as the CVCF moves forward with its work and mandate.

The summer months have provided us at the CVCF with much excitement and also much work! Three events act as examples of the busy summer we have had: The first two were the Voice Foundation's 29th Annual Symposium, "Care of the Professional Voice," and the 46th National NATS convention, "Singing Into the New Millennium", both of which were held in Philadelphia. The third event of interest this summer was our fundraising event featuring Tina Turner.

The Voice Foundation's 29th Annual Symposium was held in Philadelphia in late June, early July. I attended the conference and was excited to see the amount of interest now devoted to voice care. I can clearly remember attending my first conference in 1978 at Julliard, at which time voice care was an obscure and unrecognized area of the health field in Canada.

The differences between that first conference and this one in Philadelphia are amazing. It warms my heart to see how many doctors, singers, teachers and other voice professionals now see voice care as a necessary key to a long and successful career in voice, and how we have truly established a rapport between the relevant disciplines. People from around the world are working together to help those with voice disorders, and I very

much enjoyed learning from these individuals and bringing new ideas back to the CVCF.

The NATS meeting also presented interesting ideas for singing teachers. Two of the lectures stand out in my mind above all others: Elisabeth Howard's lecture on Popular Singing Styles, which provided great tools for use in the studio, and Meribeth Bunch's lecture on The Possible Singer of the 21st Century, which was very well presented. It was also wonderful to see and hear how many healthy, strong vocal health practices were highlighted at the NATS vocal competition.

Going to such conferences gives me insight into what presentations I should look into for the CVCF conference, and what formats work and which don't. I believe that my attendance ensures that I have all the tools and knowledge necessary to make the CVCF conference one of the best in the world. I am sure that all those who have attended our conferences in the past can attest to the fact that we always accomplish this goal.

Our third summer project, and the current fundraiser of the Canadian Voice Care Foundation, involves superstar Tina Turner. Ms. Turner's management and label were generous in allowing us to purchase 250 tickets to Tina's sold-out Calgary show on November

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# Vocal Potential

Oren L. Brown

The goal of every singer is to use the voice in an easy, healthy manner. Not every voice has operatic potential. Barbra Streisand does very well, but would be lost without a microphone. The tenor Joseph Schmidt sang a great deal of opera, but in small halls, or with the use of a microphone. He was referred to as the voice of the electronic age.

Vocal endowment is highly individual. There have been voices that showed great potential at a very early age, but they were the exception, not the rule. Adelina Patti sang "Casta Diva" at age seven to demonstrate her ability for her family<sup>1</sup>. Jon Vickers told me that his first solo performance was when he was age four. I heard Grace Bumbry sing "O don fatale" at age fifteen and I heard Donald Gramm at age seventeen singing with a free, mature sound.

Generally speaking, the body does not complete its maturation until age twenty-one. There may be exceptions where full, physical development is reached at ages fifteen or sixteen at one end, or twenty-four or twenty-five at the other. The larynx, however, was not primarily designed for singing. Phonation is only two of nine principle functions of these muscles, one voluntary and the other involuntary<sup>2</sup>. A laugh or cry are involuntary; singing and speech are voluntary. While athletes might reach peak performance in their early twenties, it is generally conceded that a singer will not arrive at a comparable stage until about age thirty-five. Renee Fleming is an excellent example.

I have found that it can take as many as ten years for a young singer with no special problems to develop to a professional level. This is assuming that the student showed exceptional talent in the first place. A male singer will be older than a female due to the laryngeal changes at puberty.

Every larynx is as different as every face, no two alike in all the world. For example, one side of the larynx might contain more muscle fibers than the other, or the vocal folds could be thicker or thinner, shorter or longer from one individual to another. Therefore, how can there be any set time schedule for each student except to discover the potential over a period of time? And that potential develops at a different time

rate for each student, just as with every other aspect of growth. The fact that no two voices are alike makes it very challenging to a teacher.

I have been misled by hearing what seemed to be a very promising young voice, only to discover over a period of time that it was limited in size or range. In other words, you are either born with the potential for what it takes both mentally and physically or you are not.

When you consider the time that it takes to become an accomplished pianist, it is obvious that everyone cannot become a Horowitz. Nor can we superimpose anything outside of the body to speed up the growing process. Developing the muscles for singing cannot be compared in any way to building the biceps by lifting weights.

Unfortunately, young singers often gain the wrong impression of what a natural voice quality is like by listening to TV, radio, recordings, or the amplified sounds in theatres. What they hear are the changes that come about when sounds are put through a microphone and loud speakers. It is a great mistake to try to imitate other singers under any circumstances.

In singing, we are asking the laryngeal muscles to do something that is an invention of the human mind. Singing for fun is one thing, but studying voice to develop its potential in range and dynamics is something else. Great composers wrote great arias having in mind the qualities of fully developed voices. This music certainly would not be appropriate to give to a beginning student, although I have known of cases where this has been done.

Singers cannot hear themselves the way they sound to others. The important thing is that a singer can match a pitch just by thinking it. The vocal folds adjust automatically and are then drawn into vibration by a flow of air. It is much like an easy sigh which starts from above and slides downward.

One should avoid reaching for higher pitches by increasing air pressure. The vocal folds are thicker in their adjustments for lower pitches and thinner for higher ones<sup>3</sup>. Increasing pressure without allowing the folds to make their adjustments by thought can lead to vocal strain. Higher tones should feel

lighter and looser as the voice is developing. This is why it is valuable to start scales from above in the beginning stages of vocal exercising.

It is natural for young voices to have a somewhat breathy quality. As the voice is exercised, the tonus of the vocal folds becomes firmer and less air escapes.

To try to deliberately eliminate a breathy quality could induce too much muscle action and lead to vocal strain, a very common occurrence in training young voices. This is especially true in working with children's voices in Broadway music. For beginners, there are many popular tunes that do not exceed eight or ten notes in range or call for volume. If a singer is using a microphone, the volume can be monitored by the person at the controls. Exceptional training for range and dynamics is definitely not required for beginning study.

The most important part of every young singer's training is to find and exercise that upper part of the voice which is not used in speaking but is required in singing. This uses another set of muscles - the cricothyroids<sup>4</sup>. The quality will seem lighter almost as if it were another voice. It is another part of the vocal mechanism and should have a quality that is different from speaking. To the male singer, it is like a woman's voice, and to the female, it seems like a little girl's voice. In time, the two parts blend together in what is known as the "mixed voice." This quality is the desired one for all classical singing and is the foundation for healthy voice use in all popular music as well. It is the complete voice.

Every musical instrument has changing qualities between the high and low pitches, but are recognized as different ranges of the same instrument. The higher notes are lighter and brighter compared to the darker and fuller quality of the lower notes. It is just the same with the voice. I often compare the image to that of a church steeple, thin and toward a point at the top and broad and full at the bottom.

There are many styles of music and many ways of using the voice. For folk or popular songs, a good sense of style and an easy use of the voice are often all that is necessary. If a student does not sing too long or too loudly at one time, there should be no difficulty. The goal should be to find out what the voice can do freely by itself, never a sense of "making" it do things. The young singer will soon recognize what feels comfortable and so will not only experience pleasure in the study, but will also bring pleasure to others.

Through continued study, a voice will grow to whatever size was endowed by nature. In time, a well-trained voice will take on a pleasing vibrato without trying to put one there. A light, pure, floating quality is natural in young voices. If a voice happens to be naturally big, then it is necessary to learn how to sing softly.

Fullness grows along with resonance, which gives the voice a carrying quality. Developing a voice can be compared to planting a seed. With the right amount of care, it will bear fruit or blossoms. But even in horticulture, there can be too much or too little care for the best results.

### **References:**

- 1) Klein, Herman (1920). *The Reign of Patti*. New York: The Century Co., p. 16.
- 2) Jackson, C and Jackson, C.L. (1937). *The Larynx and its Diseases*. Philadelphia: Saunders, p. 17.
- 3) Titze, Ingo (1944). *Principles of Voice Production*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, p. 262.
- 4) *Ibid*, Chapter 8.

## **Oren Lathrop Brown, Resume**

Oren Brown is Voice Faculty Emeritus, The Juilliard School, where he taught for nineteen years. He has been a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing since 1948.

Oren L. Brown is author of the book, "Discover Your Voice" – "How to Develop Healthy Voice Habits," (1996), Singular Publishing Group, Inc., 401 West "A" Street, Suite 325, San Diego, CA 92101: Ph 800-521-8545.

# “From Amsterdam to Houston:

*The Focus is on Singer Training”*

By Diana Hossack, Artistic Services Director, THE SINGER'S VOICE in OPERA America Volume 9, Issue 6, 1156-15<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 810, Washington, [frontdesk@operaamerica.org](mailto:frontdesk@operaamerica.org); [www.operaamerica.org](http://www.operaamerica.org)

In January, 2000, **International Opera Centrum Nederland** (IOCN), in collaboration with **De Nederlandse Opera** and OPERA America, presented a Young Singers Training Conference. Over 50 opera professionals from North America and Europe involved with the training of young singers gathered in Amsterdam to discuss optimum training required at each stage of a singer's development, and the challenges of providing such instruction.

The five-day conference began with a welcome address given by Maarten Asscher, Director of the Arts Department at the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Asscher congratulated the IOCN on the occasion of its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, recognizing Hans Nieuwenhuis's leadership as he leaves the IOCN to take the Artistic Director post of Hoofdstaf Operette. Asscher applauded the training efforts of the IOCN and all other singer training professionals, acknowledging the importance of singer training to the prosperity of opera.

Following are some quotes from Asscher's address to the conference that exemplify the demands put on an operatic singer:

“The great violinist Jascha Heifetz has said that a good violinist has to have the nerves of a bull-fighter, the digestion of a farmer, the vitality of a madam, the delicacy of a diplomat and the powers of concentration of a Tibetan monk. Now, if all that is needed to play the violin, it is clear that an opera singer should possess almost superhuman qualities. This has always been the case.

“In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the opera audience was walking around, gossiping, eating, and drinking during performances. This made enormous demands on the singers and the musicians to hold the public's

attention for longer than one spectacular aria. Nowadays, the public is respectfully silent during the performance, except for the recurrent cough or mobile telephone. But in our days, it is the perfect version on compact disc that the live performance has to emulate. And on top of that, the critical opera audience of today not only expects the perfect sound, it also expects a dramatic acting performance that matches the artistic quality of theater or film productions. In other words, opera in our time has to be *real and artificial* at the same time, and both on the highest possible level of perfection.

“These high demands from the side of the opera audience, the music critic, the composer, and the director have a significant bearing on the education of young singers. One could almost say that the education of an opera singer is a career in itself. Or more precisely: It is several careers at the same time.

“In 17<sup>th</sup>-century Naples the education of opera singers took 12 years, at which point the pupil was supposed to have become a fully fledged singer, actor, and dancer. With all the high professional demands on singers in our time (technical, musical, dramatic, physical, etc.), it is clear that the road toward a full professional status as an opera singer nowadays is certainly not shorter.

“It is here that the phenomenon of the opera studio has proven its great value, both to individual young singers and to the opera companies that have profited from the young professionals, emerging from these studios. The step from the individual academy lessons, next to the piano, into the grand scale world of the stage performance is perhaps hardly even noticed by some audiences, but for the singer it is a giant leap.”

# Websites Related to Voice Care

**IF YOU KNOW OF ANY OTHER INTERESTING,  
INFORMATIVE WEB SITES RELATED TO VOICE CARE,  
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DROP US A LINE AT [cvcf@home.com](mailto:cvcf@home.com).**

Provincial Voice Care Resource Program,  
Pacific Voice Care

**<http://www.pvcrp.com>**

New York Centre for Voice and Swallowing Disorders

**<http://www.entsurg.com/swallow.htm>**

The Voice Center at Eastern Virginia Medical School

**<http://www.voice-center.com>**

The John Hopkins Center for Laryngeal  
and Voice Disorder

**<http://www.med.jhu.edu/voice>**

American Speech-Language  
Hearing Association

**<http://www.asha.org>**

University of Pittsburgh  
Voice Center

**<http://www.upmc.edu/upmcvoice>**

Vocal Nodules and Voice Strain in Children

**[http://www.members.tripod.com/  
caroline\\_bowen](http://www.members.tripod.com/caroline_bowen)**

Voice Institute of West Texas

**<http://www.acu.edu/academics/voiceinstitute/>**

University of Wisconsin Voice Disorders Clinic

**[http://www.medsch.wisc.edu/otoweb/  
clinic.htm](http://www.medsch.wisc.edu/otoweb/clinic.htm)**

National Center for Voice and Speech

**<http://www.ncvs.org>**

Professional Communications Care

**<http://www.indy-hearing.com>**

Voice Care Clinic

**[http://voicedatabase.com/Voice\\_care/  
voice\\_care.html](http://voicedatabase.com/Voice_care/voice_care.html)**

The Voice Foundation

**<http://www.voicefoundation.org>**

Bobby R. Alford Dep't of Otorhinolaryngology

**[http://www.bcm.tmc.edu/oto/grand/  
laryngology.html](http://www.bcm.tmc.edu/oto/grand/laryngology.html)**

U of Connecticut Voice and Speech Clinic

**<http://www3.uhc.edu/otomain/voice.htm>**

University of Miami Dep't of Otolaryngology

**<http://www.med.miami.edu/otolaryngology>**

Wake Forest University Center for Voice Disorders

**<http://www.wfubmc.edu/voice/>**

University of Michigan Vocal Health Centre

**[http://www.med.umich.edu/oto/vocalhealthcenter/  
index.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/oto/vocalhealthcenter/index.htm)**

Annandale Voice Disorders Lab and Clinic

**<http://www.afccafet.com/xvoicdis.htm>**

# To Your Vocal Health

Joseph C. Stemple, Ph D.

To date, the questions that we have discussed in this column have been fairly specific to the singing voice. The question for this issue is extremely relevant as I look back on the types of “singing patients” that we see in our practice. The question is related to the speaking voice. Can the speaking voice affect the singing voice? If so, what are the pertinent issues and how can the singing teacher recognize when there is a problem?

It has always amazed me that many singers do not recognize the relationship between healthful singing and the appropriate use of the speaking voice. I often use the analogy with singers that a fine musical instrument is protected by a case. The instrument is polished or oiled, pads and strings are replaced, and in general treated as the valuable instrument that it is. The only protective case for the voice is your body. Care of the entire body is essential for the fine instrument to work at its maximum when it is called upon to perform. Part of that care is certainly related to whole body rest, the food that we eat, and proper hydration.

However, one of the biggest influences on the care of the voice is how it is used in all vocalizing situations, including speech. While the use of vocally abusive habits has obvious negative influences on the voice, the habitual use of inappropriate speaking voice technique is also an issue. Indeed, many of the singers that we see have excellent singing technique. It is the speaking voice that often creates the problem.

Just like with the singing voice, the speaking voice has a natural “best voice.” There is however often a difference between the Natural voice and the Habitual voice (Boone, 1997). Several factors including respiratory, phonatory, resonatory, posture, environmental, and misinformation factors may cause this difference.

**Respiratory** factors may include the use of shallow breathing and poor respiratory support, both of which cause laryngeal tension and often lead to speaking rate problems.

Poor **phonatory** habits often include the use of hard glottal attacks, poor glottic closure, lack of intrinsic laryngeal muscle engagement, glottal fry phonation, and use of inappropriate pitch and loudness.

**Resonatory** factors include restricted mouth and jaw movement, poor horizontal or vertical tone focus, retracted tongue, elevated larynx, and a lazy palate.

**Posture** factors may restrict supportive respiration placing tension on the larynx and restricting an open forward resonance.

**Environmental** factors include the acoustic environment, noise background, airborne environment, and stress.

Finally, factors associated with misinformation about the voice including the beliefs that deep is authoritative, high creates less tension, soft is sexy, and that we are born with the speaking voice that we have and can do nothing about it. Any and all of these factors can lead to a Habitual voice that is not the most efficient Natural voice.

How does a teacher recognize speaking voice problems? Trust what you know about efficient singing. If the sound doesn't fit the individual, it is probably not Natural. If there is perceived tension, there may be a problem. Signs of persistent use of an unnatural voice include:

- hoarseness
- huskiness
- breathiness
- glottal fry
- pinched resonance
- restricted pitch range
- decreased loudness
- decreased power
- decreased flexibility
- decreased dynamic range control
- decreased timbre

How then does all of this relate to the singing voice? To answer this, I would have you review these points:

- Components of the speaking voice and the artistic singing voice are the same.
- Functional habits and postures of the speaking voice often carry over to the singing voice.
- Poor speaking vocal habits may lead to pathologies that affect the singing voice.
- Attention paid to developing the Natural speaking voice will enhance and benefit the ability to sing in a healthful manner.

In conclusion, speak well, sing well.

Boone, D. (1997) *Is Your Voice Telling on You? How to Find and Use Your Natural Voice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. San Diego: Singular Publishing Group, Inc.

Stemple, J. (Ed.) (2000) *Voice Therapy: Clinical Studies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. San Diego: Singular Publishing Group, Inc.

Joseph C. Stemple, Ph. D.

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## **FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK**

*(Continued from Page 1)*

25th, which we were then allowed to re-sell as a fundraiser for the CVCF. It is an exciting event for us that greatly raises our profile in the community. We have been featured on local television, radio and in the newspapers and have made many important connections, ensuring that the awareness of voice care keeps growing. If you would like to get immediate notice whenever we are doing such an event in the future, please email or fax us your mailing address and we will put you on our mailing list for upcoming concert events.

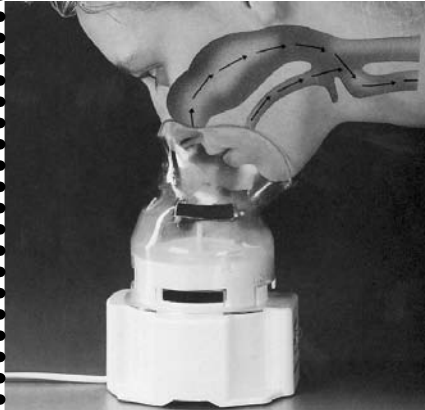
Fundraisers such as this are ensuring the future life of the Canadian Voice Care Foundation. Obtaining large numbers of seats to sold-out shows seems to be the best method of raising enough money for us to continue from year to year. However, we are hoping that our members will play an active role in this foundation and make suggestions whenever they see an opportunity. If you know of a grant or donation that would suit our foundation, or if there is an

individual that would be happy to do some sort of fundraiser for us, we would appreciate your input! Please feel free to contact us at any time, whether it is because you need help with your voice, or because you feel you can be of help to us.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you that renewed your CVCF memberships for the year 2000! Your support of our work is vital, and we truly appreciate it. We are hoping that more of you will take this step, as we are attempting to increase our annual memberships. While we send out over 1500 newsletters per issue, only 15% of the recipients are registered members of the CVCF. We cannot afford to continue our wide distribution if we are not receiving memberships in return, so we are pleading with those of you who receive this newsletter and find its contents of use, to please become a member of the foundation. Membership provides you with quick referrals to voice specialists, access to our reference library of books, videos on voice care, discounts at the next voice symposium and of course this newsletter.

# Calendar of Events

## STEAM INHALER



This personal steam inhaler is small, light and effective and can be ordered through the Canadian Voice Care Foundation (CVCF) for \$68.00 including taxes and shipping.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make your cheques payable to:

**Canadian Voice Care Foundation**  
**2828 Toronto Crescent N.W.**  
**Calgary, Alberta T2N 3W2**

For more information call  
1-888-284-9590



*We will be meeting in January to determine the date and location of the 5th International Care of the Professional and Occupational Voice Symposium. Please stay tuned to the CVCF for more details!*

*Until then, enjoy the holiday season, and may you touch another person's soul with your voice during the holidays and into this new millenium.*

### **Communication Arts and Associates Courses for Performers and Their Teachers**

Various dates this fall...

E-mail: [meribeth@creating-confidence.com](mailto:meribeth@creating-confidence.com)

Contact: 12a Crediton Hill  
London, England NW6 1HP

Tel: +44 020 7 916 2905

### **The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium is coming.**

**Stay tuned for  
more details!**

### **The Total Singer Workshop**

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Studio City, California

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Phone: 818-906-7229

Fax: 818-906-1220

Email:

[totalsingerworkshop@popeil.com](mailto:totalsingerworkshop@popeil.com)

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# Professionally Speaking's Performance Tips For Videoconferencing

Get used to it! The screen is the face to make friends with whether you are having a job interview or making a presentation. To present your best self, you'll need a set of performance skills. Be aware, as does the actor, that your body, voice, gesture, dress, lights and scenery all contribute to an outstanding performance. Here are some tips:

**PREPARE THE SET:** Make your space attractive by removing background clutter. You may want to set up a screen behind you. Arrange a plant or flowers.

**DECIDE HOW YOU WANT TO BE PERCEIVED:** Stop trying to look like a TV celebrity and start projecting yourself. Choose words that describe the image you want to project. Feel the words (energetic? flexible? organized?) while speaking into the screen.

**BE SURE OF YOUR INTENTION:** Do you want to get this job? Do you want the listener to buy your product? Do you want to convince team members that they need you in the up-coming presentation? Select active verbs to make sure you stick with your intention.

**WRITE OUT WHAT YOU MUST BE SURE TO SAY:** Send a clear message. Don't be sidetracked by questions. Use short sentences and pause frequently for time delays.

**DRESS THE PART:** Honor the dress code of the company and add a personal color or accessory. If the code is the business suit, select a shirt, blouse, tie or accessory that updates your look. Hair should be off the face and groomed with a styled cut. Avoid black, white & patterns.

**PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR POSTURE:** It sends a message! Sit in a reasonably hard chair. Lengthen your

spine, open your chest and balance your head over your shoulders. Cross your feet under your chair. This position will keep you upright.

**REFER TO NOTES:** Look down at your notes, get your thought, look up into the eyes of the person on the screen—then speak. Avoid digressions & filler words. Keep your hands on the table with one hand on top of the other. Avoid fidgeting with a pencil or rings. Let instincts determine your gestures. Don't touch your face or hair.

**MAINTAIN VOCAL ENERGY:** Speak in a pitch level that provides a ring. Practice speaking while cupping your ears and speak only in the range that provides ring. Activate your lips and eyes.

**BE ORGANIZED:** Rehearse what you plan to say. Memorize your first and last sentence in addition to your main points. Practice your "sign in" (*Good morning. I'm Susan Knight*) and your "sign off" (*It's been a pleasure to talk with you. Good-bye.*) Your "sign in" sets the tone for the conferencing. Your "sign out" is what your listeners will remember.

**ENJOY BEING ON SCREEN:** The screen is your friend. It's your job to connect with the people on the screen and make them feel comfortable. Find a way to invite them into your screen as if you were inviting them into your office. Enjoy speaking to people.

Reprinted from The Speaker's Voice newsletter, Jul-Dec 1998. For more information contact Lucille S. Rubin, Ph.D. at Professionally Speaking, 119 West 57<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 820, New York, NY, 10019. Ph: (212) 245-5944, Fax: (212) 307-5072, or Profspeak@aol.com

# José van Dam / Master Singer

It is refreshing to hear a singer say he is still learning to master his voice—especially when he is already 60, has been performing for 40 years and has a discography of over 140 recordings to his credit. “The voice evolves. I think the more you sing, the more it evolves,” said Belgian bass baritone José van Dam days before the opening of Debussy’s *Pelleas et Melisande* at the Metropolitan Opera, his first appearance there in twelve years. “I was 30 before I was really sure of my technique, and there are things that I can sing more easily now than 10 years ago.”

“Teaching interests me very much, and I hope to start in a few years. I would begin with breathing and support with the diaphragm—that is the key. The soft palate should be up and the mouth should be opened correctly—vertically. You have to drop the jaw at the hinges just in front of the ears. We would work on only small sections of traditional Italian arias, and many vocal exercises. Ideally, I would see the student 2 or 3 times per week. It’s also important to teach a student how to work alone. Depending on the student, we would work at technique for 6 months to 2 years. After this has been mastered, we would start working on the major arias. At this point, you can concentrate on the text to understand its meaning and give it its personality, in opera and in song.”

Known to the general public through his convincing portrayal of the principal role in the film *The Music Teacher*, van Dam has strong views on the state of singing today. “One of the most important things for a young singer is patience.

When I was starting out, 85 per cent of the singers had good technique. Now it’s about 65 to 70 per cent. Today, when someone has a beautiful voice, they are discovered very quickly and pushed by the recording industry, and sometimes it comes too quickly for young singers. There are two things driving people today: money and having things come fast. They forget that stars like Pavarotti and Domingo have taken years to get where they are now. They must have time, patience, and humility,” he explains.

“Naturally, there are many ways to sing, some good and some bad. To be a good singer, you should be able to do whatever you want with the voice with nuances and *pianissimi*, and that means having a good technique. I don’t think that they stress the importance of technique enough at conservatories and universities. Every student has a different instrument. Before singing and interpreting, the teacher and student must construct the instrument. Only when this instrument has been formed do you say to the singer ‘You now have an instrument, now you can learn how to make music.’ Very often you find a young singer who is making music with an incomplete instrument.”

*Excerpted from José van Dam/Master Singer, Wah Keung Chan President & Editor of La Scena Musicale, Canada’s Guide to Classical Music, Vol. 6.2, October 2000.*

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## Canadian Voice Care Foundation

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Administrative Assistant: Paula G'froerer  
Membership & Subscriptions: \$25/year

Advertising rates: Available upon request

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