

## Teaching Philosophy

While the voice may be invisible, singing does not have to be a mystery. The voice is a flexible and versatile instrument and, like any skill, singing is highly trainable. Every *body* is different—while no one voice can do everything, singers are capable of much more than they think. As a teacher, I consider it a privilege to help students break through their (often self-imposed) limits—physiological, mental, and otherwise.

The process of singing can be particularly complex. The voice is an instrument that singers can neither see nor detach from themselves. Singers must connect physical sensations with more or less “desirable” sounds, which they then depend on their teachers’ subjective ears for validation. Voice is also the only instrument which doubles as our primary means of communication in everyday life. Considering this, singers often have complicated relationships between voice, identity, and self-esteem, and addressing both body and mind during vocal training is critical.

To overcome resistance to such vulnerability, teachers must create an environment of trust where the student feels capable and empowered. Teachers may not always provide direct answers for a student - rather, they guide the student toward making their own discoveries and artistic choices. My teaching is empathetic and collaborative, emphasizing process and exploration while deepening self-awareness. Encouraging self-reliance not only elevates the student’s confidence; it also allows them to trust their physical and creative instincts without relying on their aural perception or mental filter.

My students are given a clear, evidence-based foundation in functional vocal technique so that they understand and appreciate how their instrument works. Concepts such as breath management, registration, and resonance are presented simply so that students learn how to teach themselves. My goal is for singers to build a sustainable, versatile vocal technique that enables meaningful storytelling. Artistry is as critical for me as technical proficiency, and I am passionate about guiding students to express themselves without inhibition.

Just as every voice is unique, each singer has their own aesthetics and goals, learning preferences, and vocal histories. I genuinely believe that every student is capable and that it is the teacher’s job to help find the right entry point. As such, I customize a plan that safely challenges each individual while capitalizing on their strengths. Depending on the student, our lessons may be more playful or regimented, use movement or visualization, or explore a more external or internal approach to expression.

Performers are often told to focus, be in the moment, and to perform authentically. Yet, our education does not always explicitly address these skills. My students are prompted towards reflection and contemplation, and I often include formal and informal mindfulness practices as

part of our work. Lessons emphasize questions over directives so students are guided towards deeper inquiry and self-awareness. Furthermore, I have found that students use these practices to release whatever tension (physical or otherwise) might hinder a satisfying performance.

My students are encouraged to celebrate the process of being an artist and lifelong learner. While we may never “arrive”, students grow to appreciate what they *can* do, to learn from their struggles, and to inspire and be inspired by their colleagues. Similarly, I am passionate about learning and embrace the process of growing as a teacher. We are strongest as a community when we learn from and listen to each other, and I continue my own education to be of best service to my students.