

Subject: Singing techniques applied in contemporary jazz and pop music and their role in the interpretation of selected textual/musical pieces

This paper is based on the entire available material and the observations I have made during the analysis thereof. It also takes into consideration my own experiences, supported by the musical pieces whose textual and musical analysis I am presenting in Chapter V. In Chapter I, I present in detail the components of the speech apparatus, such as the respiratory tract, larynx, the resonance and articulation apparatuses, as well as their functions in the body. I also focus on the proper singing posture during voice training and while performing on stage. In the next part, the focus moves towards specific vocal methods applied in the contemporary pop and jazz vocal training where I attempt to determine what factors affect their development and evolution. This paper aims to describe the various aspects of the most popular vocal training methods in the contemporary pop and jazz vocal training. An important objective of the thesis was to answer the following questions:

- Are various methods worth familiarizing with in instrumental practice?
- Shall one method be applied exclusively, marginalizing other methods?
- Is there a single perfect method that will provide accurate guidance in vocal training?
- Or to the contrary, is none of the methods ideal and they all have their fallbacks?
- Should vocal training methods solely revolve around voice as a speech apparatus or should vocal training be integrated in a broader context of musical training?

These were some of the questions I tried to answer in this paper. Many existing myths about singing and vocal training, and whether such training is needed at all, encouraged me to tackle this subject. Unfortunately, history shows numerous cases of people who lost their voices and had to undergo rehabilitation as they had been unaware of and did not work on mastering the processes taking place in their voice-generating apparatus. These examples allow a certain degree of confidence in stating that matters related to vocal training shall not be ignored. I am quite convinced that familiarity with those techniques enables the development and strengthening of our instrument, to extract its most natural quality and to discover its unique sound. In my professional practice, multiple times I have encountered the dilemma which young people are faced with. While intending to follow education in a specific musical genre, they were unaware, and therefore uncertain of which method they should follow. In addition, I would often times see certain groups strongly convinced of the supremacy of one method over the

others, that one specific method would enable them to perfect their voice-generating apparatus. In Chapter II a subjective selection of common applied voice training techniques in contemporary pop and jazz music is presented. Their development in recent years has been presented as well – these include, among others, *Bel canto*, SLS (*speech level singing*), CVT (*Complete Vocal Technique*), *Belting* and MIX. Many people have been reluctant to applying any of the so called *classical* vocal techniques which attracted no interest whatsoever among pop music performers. They feared losing their autonomy and originality. This led to a conflict between classical and pop music performers, a lot of prejudice emerged between the two groups that can be observed to this day, unfortunately. Further in the thesis, especially in Chapters III and IV, I analyze whether one particular method is specifically relevant to a particular music genre and if so, whether this approach would limit other possibilities to explore. I am also raising the question of whether there is a technique which could best support a beginner's vocal training. I am strongly convinced that producing the sound and the work on specific parts of a given style have a set of characteristic features. Without a doubt, the approach will differ substantially between styles or genres in its final form, i.e. its timbre, sound, articulation or resonance. There will also be features pertinent to a certain style or genre. At the same time, I believe there should be a universal group of features defined for a wide range of genres, and that it would be a solid basis for our vulnerable yet powerful instrument – regardless of musical taste that a given performer wants to develop in. This dissertation is meant to demonstrate that it is not technique that is the purpose of singing education as such, nor that it is the most important part of voice development. A hypothesis that technique is a perfect tool and means in professional vocal development can certainly be put forth, however, in the end it should constitute a means of personal expression. Its purpose should be the message, the content expressed by means of emotions and personal expression. The message and manner of conveying a given musical technique should be a combination of experiences, knowledge, expertise in music theory, history, the timing and feeling of a certain style. All that shall be based on individual artistic choices. Part of this dissertation is devoted to the interpretation of literary texts in the context of a given musical genre and a group of techniques which are characteristic of that genre. The analysis of that matter is included in Chapter IV. What seems to be a significant aspect of vocal development is its training in a specific context. I stand by the opinion that in order to sing well and be well aware of one's voice, one should follow a general musical training, i.e. to know music theory, the rhythmical and stylistic context. To a large extent, one should learn to navigate the piece using the existing principles of music. It appears equally important to apply vocal training and development techniques that would

match the message/content of the piece performed. My analysis is based on the example of selected own textual/musical pieces which chapter V is dedicated to. I am attempting to determine whether distinctive features of a certain genre could determine the interpretation of a musical piece, whether the text and the interpretation thereof are superior in the process, or is the textual layer merely an addition to the aesthetic and technical features. Could the exact opposite possibly be true? The analysis of various vocal training methods and voice development has been enriched with the interview with dr. Anna Gadt in Chapter VI. Musical scores of the analyzed pieces served as the subject of my research in this dissertation. Their selection was carefully planned and considered, making them the basis for theoretical research contained in this paper.

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Conclusion

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