

THE BRITISH VOICE ASSOCIATION

# COMMUNICATING VOICE

 BVA

VOLUME 16: ISSUE 2 – AUTUMN 2015



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## DR EVA CARLSON 1946 – 2015

Eva Carlson died on 14 March 2015, having dealt bravely with a long-term illness over several years. On 15 May, a service celebrating her life and career took place in the Chapel at St Thomas' Hospital where she worked for more than 30 years.

Eva came to England from Sweden in 1971 and qualified as an SLT in 1973. She was one of the first to complete the masters offered by Guy's Medical School under Bob Fawcus. It was on this course that Eva developed many long-lasting friendships. She was a sensitive listener and an interesting and stimulating conversationalist.

Lesley Mathieson remembers, "I first met Eva in 1972 when she came to my clinic at the Middlesex Hospital, as an MSc student. Her appearance had been preceded by a call from her tutor who thought I should be warned that Eva was a very challenging and demanding student. She was right but in the very best sense of these terms. Eva asked endless questions and queried the givens of clinical intervention in a way that benefitted me enormously as her clinician. We became firm friends and our vigorous clinical discussions continued throughout her life."

Eva began practising at Plaistow Hospital and came to St Thomas' Hospital in January 1977, where she subsequently worked until her retirement in April 2007. She specialised in ENT for

the last 17 years of her career as head of service.

Eva was a founder member of Afasic, a parents group for children with developmental language disorder, and of Action for Dysphasic Adults. She was instrumental in establishing the first UK swimming club for laryngectomees at the Royal Free Hospital. She was also the first chair of the London Voice and Laryngectomy Specific Interest Group and a committee member in the early days of the British Voice Association. She was the main author of six academic papers and wrote chapters in two books.

Eva was one of the first voice therapists to undertake doctoral studies and enrolled as a part-time PhD student in the then Department of Phonetics and Linguistics at University College London. Let no one underestimate the personal and scientific challenges of combining clinical data with academic research – but Eva triumphed, and in 1995, nine years after commencing the research, she received her PhD. Prior to this, in 1993, Eva received the Van Lawrence Prize for contribution to voice research. Eva was a pioneering clinician who showed that best evidence-based practice could successfully combine objective measurement with empathetic insight and experience.

Eva made a significant contribution to the development of multidisciplinary voice clinics and to the clinical teaching of SLTs, surgeons and undergraduates of both professions. She maintained a tremendous energy and interest in

the field of ENT over the course of her career, always ready to share her immense knowledge and always open to new ideas and keen to learn new techniques, while being very modest about her own achievements. She was a superb mentor and teacher who nurtured and empowered more junior therapists. Those of us who were fortunate enough to work alongside her will be forever in her debt.

The greatest challenge enforced on Eva was ill-health. She endured it all with stoicism and left her lovely flat to go back to her beloved Stockholm where her family lived. Eva took great delight in watching her nephews, nieces and godchildren grow up and would recount their activities with pride.

The courage she showed in so many aspects of her life has been an example and inspiration to us all. She continued to have a busy social life, meeting friends, going to concerts and enjoying her telephone calls. Throughout, she was still the Eva we had always known, looking for solutions to live the life she wanted to live and enthusing those around her. Eva always looked for the silver lining and generally found the upside of everything. A positive force indeed and sorely missed.

*Ann Whitehorn, Lesley Mathieson, Renata Whurr, Evelyn Abberton, Adrian Fourcin, Glynda Kinsella, Roshan McClenahan, Fiona Halstead, Tish Ramsay, Angela Ney-Goldenberg and Tori Burnay.*

## EDITORIAL

The BVA have links with associations specializing in multi-disciplinary voice throughout the world so it was no surprise to see several BVA members at the Pan European Conference in Florence this summer. Our President - Dane Chalfin as well as Kim Chandler, Craig Lees, Rebecca Moseley-Morgan, Ruth Epstein, Mary Hammond, John Rubin and I were among the presenters. Read the report on page 12.

Markus Hess was appointed the successor to Johan Sundberg as President of PEVOC so a Day In the Life features the Deutsche Stimmklinik.

Following on from the article by Professor Graham Welch in the last newsletter, we have 2 reports on the *Management of the Young Voice* which included his presentation. Also, the ever popular *Rock & Pop Day* returned in September ...read the in-depth analysis which starts on page 9.

There are no book reviews in this edition but I have a growing pile ready for review so keep an eye on your emails as Jackie

will be sending out titles before Christmas. If the subjects interest you then let me know and I'll post them out for you to peruse over mulled wine and mince pies.

Lynne Wayman, *Editor* and John Baines, *Photographer*  
lynnewayman.voicecentre@virgin.net



# THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Anyone who is capable of getting themselves made President should on no account be allowed to do the job.

– Douglas Adams, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

Thankfully, at The British Voice Association, being President is much more a team sport than in many other presidencies. The members of council and the working parties engage in a staggering amount of leadership, decision-making and delivery. As President, so far as I can tell, my job is mainly to report back on all the hard work that is going on around me. I would like to highlight some of this work in my first President's Letter.

Firstly, Kate Lewis, our former president, did a tremendous job at keeping our esteemed organisation moving forward. She oversaw our difficult, but financially necessary decision to stop distributing our former Journal LPV. Kate, along with John Rubin, our Treasurer, have guaranteed a much brighter financial future for our charity, ensuring that we can not only stay alive, but continue producing the high-quality training events for our membership that form the bedrock of our position as one of the leading multidisciplinary voice education resources in the world.

The Education Working Party, led by Emma Winsome, continues to produce excellent events that drive the world of voice forward by featuring the leading authorities in our disciplines delivering the latest development in thinking and practice in our fields. These events also generate a significant portion of the income that we reinvest into future courses and meetings. Our members really are our greatest asset and with this in mind we are working towards a Masters Series of half-day, intensely practical Master classes presented by some of our most esteemed and long-serving members. More to come on this new British Voice Association product soon.

In addition to the Education Working Party courses there have been many

satellite events that helped us both raise our profile and raise funds. Mr. Nick Gibbins, our newest ENT on council, hosted 'The Art and Science of Voice' on 16th April 2015 in Lewisham and it was a huge success. The event also generated nearly £1000 in donations for The British Voice Association, and we are truly grateful. Sara Harris, SLT, also from the Lewisham team, presented a very well-received event on Vocal Health at Leeds College of Music, our newest corporate member, and has been invited back this year for a follow-up event with both Nick and myself.

Other new council members include Craig Lees, Lecturer in Pop Voice at Leeds College of Music, who gave a wonderful interactive contemporary choral session at our ever-popular Interactive Rock and Pop Day. Craig will also be helping Kim Chandler with our Communications Working Party, bringing a youthful perspective to our social media engagement. We also very warmly welcome back the eminent speech therapist and past-president of the BVA, Ruth Epstein, as President-Elect.

Mr. John Rubin, ENT, has graciously returned as treasurer and we all rest more easily knowing our money is in very safe hands. Kristine Carroll-Porczynski continues to keep us kosher and legal as company secretary, working tirelessly in tandem with our administrator, Jackie Ellis, to keep the whole ship afloat. We really would be, forgive another nautical reference, lost at sea without them.

The British Voice Association website is currently receiving an overhaul and upgrade to make it more friendly for mobile devices. This decision was taken under the expert advice of David Siddall and based on real data about the changes in consumer buying trends, especially those of younger people who will hopefully, with your help, become the next generation of British Voice Association members. We will be introducing exciting new features like online membership sign-up and a members' only content area as well. Our new look should be unveiled just in time for the new year so please watch this web space.

Whilst we are talking online, Eventbrite has become an invaluable tool for online



Dane Chalfin

event registration. Not only does the site work well for selling tickets, they also give a very generous discount for charities, saving us both administrative time and money. Do not fret, we have no intention of doing away with a real person at the end of the phone, but for our members and prospective members who are embracing the ever-changing landscape of technology, we are doing our best to stay current and accessible.

It is always worth overstating that we are nothing without our members. I would like to add to that by saying that we are nothing without our members helping us attract new members. No matter what we do to make joining and engaging with The British Voice Association easier nothing can act as a substitute for the recommendation of a current member to another voice practitioner who would benefit from the mentoring, guidance, continuing education and networking we offer. These are the things that have kept me a member for the last decade and will keep me a member for the foreseeable one.



(right) This edition's cover photo: Selena Evangeline at the 2015 'Interactive Rock & Pop Day' in September.



## MARCUS HESS NEWLY APPOINTED CHAIR OF PEVOC

# ONE DAY IN THE LIFE

## ...AT THE DEUTSCHE STIMMKLINIK (GERMAN VOICE CLINIC)

A routine day in the multidisciplinary Voice Clinic starts with a brief meeting at 8 a.m. with the lead doctors – the highly experienced phoniatrists and ENT doctors Dr. Susanne Fleischer and Prof. Markus Hess.

There are two examination rooms with the latest kit and voice analysis tools. The expertise of the clinic covers children and adults experiencing a whole range of voice problems. One of the strongest aspects of our team is holistic examination, which leads to a holistic diagnosis meaning that every facet of the problem is covered. The multidisciplinary team includes a logopedist, two physicians, a singing teacher, and, if required, a psychotherapist and manual therapist. A basic examination includes a case history, VHI questionnaire, perceptual and electroacoustic analyses and videostroboscopy. Laryngeal EMG, videokymography, high speed imaging, lung function testing and other investigations are at our disposal, so patients need not be referred to other institutions. In Germany, this one-stop multidisciplinary approach is a unique strength of the Stimmklinik.

Most of the patients are complex cases referred to us by ENT doctors, phoniatrists, logopedists, singing teachers as well as other professions including neurology, cardiology, pulmonology from all over Germany and abroad. Today, Susanne saw a young female lawyer from southern Germany referred by an ENT colleague. The patient presented with unilateral recurrent nerve paralysis and Reinke's edema. The referring doctor was asking for confirmation of the diagnosis and seeking phonosurgical therapy. Birte Heckmann, logopedist and voice trainer, began her examination from the SLT perspective, in this case focussing on residual voice function and compensatory strategies. Susanne completed this first assessment with endoscopy using a flexible high definition (HD) tip-chip endoscope. The lawyer tolerated the laryngoscopy very well and understood the reason for her hoarseness when video clips were presented to her on the monitor. She was happy that no additional endoscopy with videokymography (VKG) and high speed imaging (HSI) was needed. However, laryngeal EMG was necessary as a next diagnostic step. It revealed that there was very little activity in the affected, left side laryngeal muscles. Surgery, including augmentation laryngoplasty combined with phonomicrosurgery of the edema, was recommended and scheduled for the next day.

At 9 a.m., I was on my way to the adjacent out-patient OR-building where four patients were awaiting ambulatory



*Markus Hess*

phonomicrosurgical operations.

Case 1: A patient suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and severe hoarseness caused by so called bamboo nodes required surgery with high precision instruments. I had the stroboscopy videos of the patient on my laptop as I routinely compare functional assessment with the organic lesion I see during the operation, an extra aid when performing professional functional microsurgery.

Case 2: A patient from abroad with scarred vocal folds after surgery of Reinke's edema requiring microdissection.

Case 3: Augmentation, with a permanent filler, for a patient with obligatory anticoagulation. I perform these operations as an out-patient without bridging the medication with heparin, so the patient can stay on vital bloodthinners.

Case 4: This patient was the toughest one: He came from middle Germany and had bilateral overinjection of a permanent injectable filler. In one session it had to be removed and the vocal fold was remodelled and reconstructed.

Back in the Stimmklinik in the 2nd examination room, Susanne was seeing a soprano (which for her was a very early start, indeed!) together with Jale Papila, who is an alto and singing pedagogue and who is an integrated part of the team. The patient was suffering from loss of high notes over several months. Additionally she felt a continuing pain in the left anterior neck. Jale assessed the patient's vocal technique, proving that singing pianissimo in the passagio and high pitch notes was not possible. Videostroboscopy with close-up zoom endoscopy and using narrow band imaging (NBI) illumination revealed a minimal mid-membranous swelling on the left vocal fold. Jale and Susanne both agreed that conservative voice therapy should be tried first. Laryngeal muscle tension in this case was secondary to compensatory techniques due to the minimal mass lesion on the vocal fold. In our experience, in cases like this, others may assume reflux as a causative factor – we think that the influence of reflux is far too overestimated in the etiology of voice disorders. The morning continued with more patients for all of the team.

For instance, Susanne was seeing a retired teacher with bilateral vocal fold bowing combined with globus pharyngis. In this case she applied the laryngeal examination using the Lieberman protocol and manual therapy. Results were almost instantaneous.

After assessing another singer Jale began planning the Hamburg Voice Symposium - on World Voice Day 2016. Birte continued her morning with voice therapy sessions and Frank Müller, an engineer who is co-founder of the Stimmklinik and a trained singer, was updating the website where he posted new workshops (thank God there is somebody who takes care of these IT issues!).

All staff met again at 1 p.m. for a short meeting while having a quick lunch in our cozy little kitchen. The front desk staff members and nurses, Nadine, Jessica and Viola, exchanged administrative issues and updated others on registrations for upcoming events. After a final quick espresso, the afternoon began with complex cases which were presented and reviewed by Birte and Jale, and final diagnosis were made by Susanne and myself. This afternoon was reserved for in-office procedures (augmentations, KTP-laser, botulinumtoxin injections). The first elderly patient suffered from recurrent laryngeal papillomatosis and was treated with fiberoptic transnasal office-based KTP laser with a tiny glass fiber routed within the flexible endoscope. This absolutely painless procedure took 15 minutes. The patient had received this kind of intervention with topical anesthesia spray three times before, which he tolerated well allowing him to leave the office 30 minutes after ambulatory laser therapy. He was happy as this office surgery saves him from repeated general anaesthesia. The previous 4 patients were given their

postoperative check and a short endoscopy revealed that they had no complications and could go home. Recommendations were given how to (or not to) use the voice, avoiding coughing and throat clearing, and sticking to vocal hygiene guidelines. In the Stimmklinik total silence is not recommended as it is stressful to the client and probably is not being complied with, we instruct them how to safely use the voice, including soft (!) whispering.

I allocated the late afternoon to doctoral students. Today, Elisabeth and Philip demonstrated their photo documentation of lab experiments, proving new surgical techniques for thyroplasty (Elisabeth) and electrostimulation of laryngeal muscle in RLN paralysis (Philip). I acknowledged their skillful micropreparations in excised tissues and macro-fotographic illustration. The photos are very useful for upcoming conference talks!

Of course, how could a day not end without paperwork, administration, phone calls, and some annoying letters from insurance companies. However, emails and letters from happy patients and clients make our days – these are the (honestly) real motivators for keeping us not only moving, but also working with intrinsic satisfaction, if not happiness.

And when does a work day in the Deutsche Stimmklinik really end? Actually never. Whoever is caught up in Voice will never stop thinking about it. Voice is highly addictive. And friends know that at the voice clinic there are not only workers, but passionate specialists – for the voice.

[www.stimmklinik.de](http://www.stimmklinik.de)  
[kontakt@stimmklinik.de](mailto:kontakt@stimmklinik.de)

### Part 1

## BURNOUT

**Saturday**  
**30th January 2016**

### SPEAKERS

**ANNE HOLMES**  
Group Analytic  
Psychotherapist

**CHRISTINA SHEWELL**  
Qualified Voice Teacher,  
Lecturer, Specialist Speech  
and Language Therapist

**DISCOUNTED RATE  
AVAILABLE WHEN BOTH  
EVENTS BOOKED AT THE  
SAME TIME!**

Two fascinating separate but highly linked half-days exploring the effects of stress on voice-users and some of the possible routes available to return to improved voice-use. These can be experienced and booked individually or, with our special combined fees, can be booked together. Visit our website for further information and booking forms:

### Part 2

## EMOTIONAL REPAIR

**Sunday**  
**28th February 2016**

### SPEAKERS

**LYNNE WAYMAN**  
Singing Teacher, Vocal  
Coach, Voice Rehabilitator

**ANNE HURREN**  
Senior Lecturer, Speech and  
Language Therapy, Leeds  
Beckett University

**JO ASHCROFT**  
Clinical Psychologist,  
Royal Brompton Hospital



# The voice in Distress



## BVA EVENT REPORT

## MANAGEMENT OF THE YOUNG VOICE

Hilary Jones

*Voice and Dialect coach, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland*

The proof of the pudding - so the saying goes - is in the eating and if post conference comments are proof, *'Management of the Young Voice'* was a worthy addition to the BVA's annual menu of CPD. From a lone singing teacher whose regular attendance at BVA events confirms she is 'on the right track', to a young speech therapist learning from 'more experienced colleagues' and colleagues' delight at touching base with familiar BVA faces and forging links with new ones, the event was a timely reminder of the often complex challenges associated with young voices.

Lesley Cavalli's fascinating lecture *Vocal Tract and Voice Development from Birth through Adolescence* was a guided tour through the physiological development of the vocal tract from cradle to the teenage years, highlighting differences between the male and female pubertal voice and the impact of hormonal changes. Lesley emphasised that treatments for the disordered voice - including surgery and therapy - must be developmentally appropriate with each child considered individually as assessment processes are critical. This was a highly valuable introduction to the day, reminding delegates of how much we now know about the human voice and how much research is still to discover. Lesley's observation that parents often 'model' their child's dysphonia was a theme taken up in Emma Winscom's presentation *Fragile – handle with care*



Emma Winscom



Lesley Cavalli

where she shared her experiences of teaching teenage female vocalists. There was much audience recognition as Emma introduced two 'hypothetical' case studies which examined hormonal influence on singing ability, the pressures of 'parental encouragement' and the current trend in popular music for female singers to 'belt' every song. As mother to a fourteen year old, who spends every evening vocally emulating Ariana Grande, I am all too aware of the challenges faced by singing teachers in ensuring safe vocal use whilst encouraging the young person's 'creativity'.

This sub-text of parental influence was also a key theme in *Singer Identities and Educational Environments* – this year's Gunnar Rugheimer Lecture given by Prof Graham Welch. The extraordinary moment when he enabled us to experience exactly what a foetus hears in utero was medical science proving what mothers have always known - that 'the interface of infant neuropsychological design and sonic experiences' encouraged by the maternal voice has an enormous impact not only on the child's speech development, but also on their singing identity. Drawing on a wide range of studies from investigation into the musical activities of the Chinese diaspora, community group singing and the 'Sing Up' project, Prof Welch examined how the child's emergent singing identity is shaped, sharing new insights including the suggestion that children are capable of being taught whole segments of song rather than just small phrases. This was warm, erudite research whose findings should be compulsory reading for every primary school teacher; it might just help prevent that 'you can't sing' comment that so often destroys the vocal confidence of young people.

Nicola Gorb's *What to do When Things go Wrong with the Voice* introduced Nelson Roy's concept of the 'Vocal Diet' (less talking and shouting) and Kittie Verdolini's 'Adventures in Voice' where the emphasis too is on reducing vocal effort and fatigue, reminding us that double casting, limiting the length of lessons and short practice sessions all help minimise vocal trauma. Nicola then presented her own four-step system: How does it sound/feel?, Imagination, The experiential approach, and Use



*Ruth Epstein and Craig Lees*

of sensory perceptual processes for motor learning. Her advice to limit external feedback ensuring that the child develops their own internal feedback mechanisms reinforced Lesley Cavalli's earlier commentary.

Ruth Hansford tackled the issue of hearing in *Ears Need Looking After Too* and it was astonishing to learn that current legislation on Health and Safety only applies to adults and not children. Whilst new laws will influence future design, most school acoustics daily challenge staff and students. Hearing health surveillance was recently introduced into my own institution but again - as with Prof Welch's research - this information needs to be more widely disseminated into our school systems; we are all too aware of the impact of voice loss for teachers and it seems vital that further studies are conducted into the relationship between the two.

The day concluded with Jenevora Williams exploring the why, what and how of teaching technique to children, reminding us of the importance of using appropriate terminology in successful teaching: a silent hurra from all of us who would consign Edu-speak to room 101!

## FURTHER COMMENTS

from Gordon Stewart...

*"Then cherish pity lest you drive an angel from your door"*

William Blake's poem about children came into my mind during this day about the Young Voice. Pity isn't what we need, of course, but concern is - their future is for a while in our hands.

Lesley Cavalli gave an ideal presentation tracing the development of the vocal tract and the development of the voice from birth up through adolescence. The students I see in the school are still on the way to physical maturity, and although some of them are making mature sounds (some might think too mature) things are still on the move. It was good to be led through this maze so expertly. This was total justification of the



*Ruth Hansford*

reasons for the success of our Association.

The pressure the young put on themselves can be extraordinary. Emma Winscom's picture of the teenage girl's life was scary; she chose the label for her talk well: Fragile – handle with care. She's well placed to talk about the subject: she teaches a large number of young singers across a variety of styles. It's clear that when teaching them how to use their malleable voices you also need real skill in the psychology area. Laying down safe pathways for the young is hugely important, not only for those who hope for a career.

Nicola Gorb, like Lesley Cavalli, from the Great Ormond Street Hospital, gave an account of her work in an illuminating session. My notes suggest, among other things, that children should know about the changes they go through – to reduce the pressure on them; that if they are doing things which are potentially inappropriate they should be moved in positive directions rather than pursued down the "don't do that" trail. Imagery, positive distraction, all used in the right way: something for all of us who instruct others.

Professor Graham Welch gave the Gunnar Rugheimer Lecture. It was impressive – high on content, high on presentation and humanity. The sadness that hit me didn't come from what he said – that was very good to hear – but from the lack of central government interest in taking much advantage of the results of research on this level. It used to be assumed that you sang at school. And that there could be home interest too, mothers singing to children. Obviously not even a Nanny State, even with no rolling back of its frontiers, would interfere there. Graham Welch made it clear that taking part in musical activities benefits children significantly, and not merely those who mean to go down a musical route. His lecture was wise and witty, and made me hope that one day long-term things may happen.

Ruth Hansford explored an issue which is not given enough prominence in our daily life. At the Guildhall School we have little charts in our rooms warning of decibel danger. I look at them if a student is held up at a rehearsal before coming on to





*Kate Lewis and Professor Graham Welch*

a session with me. We know that working with voices presents our ears with a challenge. The noise I deal with in school is stuff that I am paid to train: and what I hear tells me what I might need to do. We work out ways of dealing with that, usually by interrupting the flow of decibels with talk. But in the world outside, where we can't be in control, where someone seems to believe that noise is the proof of our existence, it's not so easy. Ear plugs are a solution, but not all are effective.

Then, for the final presentation of the day, Wonderland. Humpty Dumpty hopped up on his wall in a magnificent gesture. Lewis Carroll was a brilliant man, a logical man, and his nonsense is truth in disguise, because his nonsense wouldn't exist without sense. So when his egghead says that a word means what he wants it to mean, he is right – as long as we understand it to mean what he wants it to mean. Humpty obligingly defines his controversial word: "Glory". Then we know where he is coming from. No problem. It's good for us to examine our intentions and our vocabulary, or else, to paraphrase Kierkegaard, we will find that the discussion we were about to have can't take place because we are not talking about the same thing. Jenevora Williams challenged us to make sure that we are clear in our intentions and in our choice of words by knocking several eggs off the wall – eggs with labels like "support". I must confess that I haven't had time to consult her book since then to find what she recommends instead, but meanwhile I am glad to have had the chance to hear such a dramatic, I might say even philosophical, end to a lively day.



*Nicola Gorb*



## BVA EVENT REPORT

# INTERACTIVE ROCK & POP DAY 2015

Christie Valeriano

As with the last BVA Rock and Pop day I attended, the event on Sunday 13th September at the George IV pub in Chiswick was planned with precision, with thought to topics which were most pertinent to the BVA community.

The day started with a presentation from TC Helicon on pedalling and mic' techniques, featuring Canadian singer-songwriter, Selena Evangelina, who gave an entertaining demonstration on various effects which can be used to augment a live performance. The coup de grace was TC Helicon's gift to each attendee of a brand new MP-75 microphone and a copy of *The Ultimate Guide to Singing*, swag which more than paid for the day on its own.

Then came Kim Chandler's module on *Alternative Onsets in Rock*

and *Pop Singing*. Building on Janice Chapman's work in primal sounds, Kim divided onsets into the following divisions: Sigh, Simultaneous Onset, Creak, Cry or (whinge), and Rock Slide. Kim excels in her ability to identify and catalogue a nuance of sounds which present in pop music, not only giving these sounds the validity they deserve, but addressing healthy methods of production for each. She finished her presentation by addressing the issue of glottal stops and outlining a method to help singers link to the next word without the use of an 'over pressurised glottal' and, when necessary, employing the use of glottal with a 'glottal kiss.'

Mr John Rubin followed with a presentation on ear protection. His presentation was passionately scientific, giving statistics on hearing loss for both contemporary and classical musicians, noting first of all that, over time, rock and pop musicians tend to experience less hearing loss than one might think and, actually, of the two groups, classical musicians tend to experience a higher rate of hearing loss. He then outlined three types of protective devices, which I fully intend to use next time I'm at the opera.

Possibly the highlight of the day was Dane Chalfin's master-class style '*Using Interpretation for Technical Improvement*' session. Dane puts the 'bad boy' into vocal coaching, and gave us all a chuckle with his introduction, which he punctuated by removing several pieces of heavy metal jewellery. He rightly noted that vocal coaching has become too much like maths and focused his presentation back on opening up a healthy vocal production through exploration of emotion and intent. Using basic method acting techniques, he skilfully redirected his singers toward a



Craig Lees engages the Rock & Pop Day audience



healthy technical production through encouraging them to explore the identity, underlying emotion, objective and primal sounds involved in each song.

The final two slots in the day were no less climactic, and after a short break attendees found themselves watching a presentation on *The Truth about 'Noodles'* by Tom and Sara Harris. This delightfully humorous 'are we still awake?' moment was followed by an equally helpful presentation which demystified the fear surrounding the issue of vocal nodules. Outlining both the symptoms of nodules and some helpful exercises, they put the attendees at ease, reminding us that nodules are not the career death knell they were once thought to be. I was most relieved to hear Mrs Harris decry the use of the 'little girl' voice, thankful that the days of hearing baby voices ringing through the halls of conservatories and music schools are hopefully coming to an end. A normal, but focused speaking voice is the best approach, and the presentation put attendees at ease and gave them much needed information to pass on to their students.

The organisers were smart in scheduling conductor Craig Lees in for the final session, because just when we were ready to end the day over a pint, he brought us all to our feet for a choral session in which we learned parts to Pharrell Williams' "Happy." Craig's style is so engaging, and his voice so pleasant, it was easy to see how he was such a hit at the Pan European Voice Conference. Having been coached by Kim Chandler and Dane Chalfin, he also made good use of primal sounds' techniques, but in a choral setting, illustrating how 'whinge' technique can achieve a more unified sound in group singing, especially across a wide age range.

To briefly close the session, Kim Chandler gave a final recap, reminding us "You have to have the talent to use the technology." I most appreciated the practical approach of this day, focusing as it did on real life issues we as teachers face with our students, and hope we continue to see many more *Rock and Pop* days ahead.

*Dane Chalfin and singer on stage*



*Selena Evangeline*

## MY PERSONAL HIGHLIGHT

by Rosario Mawby

My personal highlight was TC-Helicon featuring Selena Evangeline demonstrating the *Voice Live 3* in live performance. I, like the rest of the room, was in awe, amazed with the ease and proficiency she had of the device at her feet. After demonstrating her first piece, there was laughter in the air as she spoke to us with her Barry White impression (a preset that was able to change her





voice completely through the microphone linked to the Voice Live 3). As the performance developed the repertoire went on to demonstrate looping, vocal effects and how auto-tune could be used as an effect besides its primary function. We were introduced to the 'sparkle' button, an option that once selected acted like a producer. In the recording studio post-production, the voice can be smoothed out and given a richer sound, with the Voice Live 3 this came at the touch of a button. As the presentation progressed we were now, not only in awe, but on an emotional roller coaster. What was that feeling? Simply put – a cocktail of guilt, inspiration and horror. Those of us lucky enough to own a Voice Live (I use the Voice Live Touch 2) could be seen hanging our heads in shame. I, for one, went straight home, dug out the manual and started reading profusely, because of the guilt of owning such great equipment and clearly not using it to its full advantage. However, inspiration and drive kicked in, when I realised that I may be able to master my Voice Live with even just a quarter of the mastery Selena had. But... horror came with the advance of technology, and concerned most of the backing

vocalists in the room. When Selena performed with harmonies, pre-selected from the Voice Live 3, we knew we were in trouble. The clarity and accuracy of the voices selected was astonishing. The Voice Live Touch 2 has great harmony selection, and when connected via midi to the keyboard the complex harmonies sound great. Its sensory microphone is not as efficient as its successor; they still sound a little processed in places. It was a relief to know that Selena would still use backing vocalists where the budget allows. She explained that the device was a way of not having to compensate her recorded music, but that it was never to replace actual singers – phew! The demonstration was excellent and there were many, who did not own a Voice Live, enquiring about where they could purchase it. Also, those in the room who did were looking to upgrade. Selena was a delight to listen to, encouraging and a great musician fronting for TC-Helicon.

Special thanks to TC-Helicon for bringing free copies of the "Ultimate Guide to Singing", and an MP-75 microphone for each delegate - it's getting a lot of use already!

## AN "IN-DEPTH" ANALYSIS OF DANE CHALFIN'S SESSION by Charlotte Kavanagh

*'Want to find your voice? Go primal' says Dane.*

Most of us would've received vocal coaching in our lives or, at the very least, a critique from our peers, friends and family. From professionals, we'd expect to receive guidance on our technique, both critical and constructive. From our family and more honest friends, however, we tend to receive a more emotional response, one that's a pure reaction to the song. This can be extremely useful in gauging a song's success.

Removing positive celebrations, I have found that negative feedback tends not to be elaborate but moreover comments like 'I'm just not feeling it' or 'I prefer that other song you played me' The crux being – it didn't give them the emotional response we all seek to feel when we hear music we like.

You may find that people who don't work in the music business will, innately, go to a more primal, unfiltered place, providing perhaps a more insightful opinion based on emotion alone. For this reason, it can be rather telling, test driving new material on them.

It can prove a frustrating experience, especially when you're not sure how to process the feedback. The song felt good when you wrote it, the lyrics tell the story you want and the music supports that, so where did it go wrong?

How many artists and songs do we hold dear that stop us in our tracks just by the sheer, undiluted, raw quality of their performance? We believe everything they're saying, even if we don't quite understand 'what' they're saying. Why? Because they meant it, every word.

Dane Chalfin is a renowned vocal coach, well versed in the art of vocal technique. In his session however he takes us through not technique but what he believes to be the precursor to this - our own interpretation of the song, how does it make us feel and thus, how does this impact our performance?

So perhaps Dane has the solutions for taking our performance to another level?

Using two very brave vocal victims, he asked them to pick a song and after hearing them perform, posed the following series of questions:

– Who are you?

– Who are you singing to?

– How do you feel?

– What are you trying to do?

– How does that sound in 'real life'?

He then asked the performers to break down the songs further. It's so easy to just say to yourself 'this song is a break-up song so ok, let's say 'I'm angry'' thus the song will be performed from start to finish with this one, over riding emotion. Wrong.

Great break-up songs often have a sadness to the verse, hopelessness, offering up melancholy, the what if's? There can be a certain laziness to the execution, you've been burnt and you don't have the energy to express yourself wholly.

Then we have the bridge, anticipation, a precursor to the grandiose emotion we will be displaying in the chorus.

The bridge is the cliff-hanger so can be a confusing mixture of emotions, sad but perhaps marred with anger that you have been rejected. So the primal sound of your voice may start to sound more edgy and tense.

Make way for the chorus, the emotional heart of our song, where we open the flood gates for whatever all consuming emotion our lyric is about - regret, anger, release.

So, if we were using Dane's Primal approach, we could be the jilted lover, singing to the gods, angry, berating our ex-lover, all the while through vocals laced with whimpers, sobs and sighs.

The result, from using this approach, was a significant difference in the final performance. I was left believing them which is absolutely vital if you want to have a career as an artist.

Fundamentally, great songwriting comes from a very primal place so it's in our interest to invest these feelings from the writing and recording stages through to the end stage – our performance. Don't let yourself down when you get to the point where it really matters.

We are, after all, wanting our audience to understand why we are standing in front of them and we can be certain it won't be because of our perfect breath technique!

Go Primal, feel the full spectrum of emotions and your listeners will too.

# HOT STUFF IN FIRENZE

## PEVOC

August 30th – Sept 2nd 2015

Report by Anne Leatherland

Moving from an ambient temperature of around 14C in the East Midlands to one of 37C in Italy can be a bit of a shock to the system. This proved to be the case for my colleague, Dr Gillyanne Kayes, and me, as we landed in Pisa en route to the 11th Pan European Voice Conference. It was a Sunday, which apparently meant that there were no announcements and randomly arriving trains. Thus, following an hour's wait in the heat at Pisa station we boarded a hot and crowded train for Firenze, arriving yet another hour later.

What a stunning city. We settled into our traditional, but happily, air-conditioned Italian apartment on Via degli Alfani, not far from the amazing Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore and the nearby hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. This turned out to be most fortuitous. Following a very "English" dash in the heat, we met friends at a restaurant on Piazza San Marco. It was here that the effect of the heat took its toll on Gillyanne and we ended up in the aforementioned hospital until 1am. Happily, all ended well and we were able to walk back to the apartment in the balmy early morning air. Many thanks to John Rubin, who came to our urgent assistance in the restaurant, as well as Mary Hammond, Lynne Wayman and John Baines, who kept in touch and were a great support.

What of the Conference itself? It was held in a beautiful renaissance building on Via Venezia, with rooms arranged around a picturesque central courtyard. The entrance wasn't easy to spot from the road so we got a bit hot and bothered finding it and unfortunately missed the plenary lecture by Prof. Johan Sundberg. There was a wide-ranging programme of talks, paper presentations, workshops and poster presentations encompassing many voice-related disciplines. We were focussed on singing and related voice science papers, so began by attending an engaging presentation by Kim Chandler and Dane Chalfin; Primal Sounds in Pop Vocal Pedagogy. This explored how natural emotional sounds i.e. parasympathetic physical responses can be harnessed to good effect in pop and rock singing. From here we moved on to some interesting paper presentations concerned with Voice Range Pro-filing (VRP). Bamps, Luyten et al found that information from VRP was insufficient for classifying singing voices, whilst J.B.H. Pabon described work to characterize the factors shaping the 3kHz region of the spectrum (surrounding the singer's formant) looking for their consistency over the VRP. He highlighted a down-going slope in the second formant and an up-going one in the third, the pattern of which can help us to perceive a voice as male or female. There are interesting demonstrations available on the author's website, which unfortunately I didn't catch, but you can enquire at [pabon@koncon.nl](mailto:pabon@koncon.nl). Other points of interest for me that day were a presentation on Overtone Singing, also by Pabon and colleagues,



and the Round Table presentation on "Inhaling Singing". In the latter, singer and researcher, Francoise Vanhecke, and colleagues revealed how inhaled sounds can be made safely. Francoise used inhaled singing to both communicate the truth of human suffering and to provide an ethereal vocal backdrop to a folk song. By late afternoon the heat of the day was rising in the un-air-conditioned venue and given the drama of the night before, we adjourned to the cool apartment, by way of the Gelateria on Piazza San Marco (I can recommend the melon ice cream).

Day two was busy and we attended many papers. I was interested and amused to hear a presentation on "Flowball in Vocal Pedagogy": Remember those little toys with a basket at the end of a pipe and a ball you can balance on the airstream when you blow into the pipe? There is now a similar apparatus which is being used in research and teaching with good results. Another innovative tool is the "doctor Vox", based on the phonating through a tube into water idea. We chatted about this over coffee with developer Dr I. Denizoglu and Gillyanne received a doctor Vox apparatus to trial with Vocal Process. As ever, the breaks at the conference were a great time for swapping ideas, making new contacts and catching up with friends/colleagues. The refreshing food and drink provided were served outdoors in the scenic terrace surrounding the courtyard. The afternoon brought a sequence of MRI-based studies. These were accompanied by stunning visuals of vocal tract modifications during singing and of diaphragm movement.

We eschewed the Gala Dinner, opting for a quiet and cool al fresco meal close to the Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore, with "white" red wine which complemented our truffle dish perfectly. The evening was rounded off by the virtuosic playing of Vivaldi by two accordionists, buskers, near the cathedral. The sound was like a giant church organ due to the acoustic in the Piazza.

I wish we had allowed time before and after the conference to see more of the wonders of Firenze. There was, however, one more highlight before dashing for the train back to Pisa airport. Johan Sundberg and colleagues gave an excellent and illuminating presentation, with details of modelling on "Nasal Resonance in Singing". The revelation that "nasalisation can enhance high frequency partials" and "reduce the risk of phonatory instabilities" gave us food for thought. Time to rethink the position on the use of the nasal port in singing. Hot stuff indeed!

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Tel: +44 (0)300 123 2773 Email: [administrator@britishvoiceassociation.org.uk](mailto:administrator@britishvoiceassociation.org.uk) Website: [www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk](http://www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk)

Copy deadline for the next issue: February 15th 2016