

# COMMUNICATING VOICE

SUMMER 2021  
VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2



Photo: Olive Barba

CHOICE FOR  
**VOICE**  
2021

**CROSSING BOUNDARIES  
IN VOICE**

**3-5 SEPTEMBER 2021  
A 3-DAY, INTERNATIONAL  
ONLINE CONFERENCE**

The journal of **the british voice association** – the UK's voice for voice

## SUMMER 2021

### VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2

GUEST EDITORIAL by Craig Lees ..... 2

#### EVENT REVIEWS

Secrets of the Spoken Voice..... 3

WORLD VOICE DAY 2021

Contributions by BVA members ..... 4

New, BVA voice-care leaflet..... 6

#### FEATURE ARTICLE

*Facilitating the Empowerment of Transgender Voices Through Singing*  
by Alex Pullinger ..... 7

#### BOOK REVIEWS

*Psychology of Voice Disorders: 2nd edition: Deborah Caputo Rosen, Johnathan Brandon Sataloff, Robert T Sataloff*  
Reviewed by Marissa Steer ..... 9

*Training the Contemporary Commercial Singer: Elizabeth Ann Benson*  
Reviewed by Jonathan Gunthorpe and Jo Sear ..... 10

*Sing From Your Core: Jole Berlage Buccellati*  
Reviewed by Alessandra Testai ..... 11

#### EVENT PREVIEW

Choice for Voice 2021: Crossing Boundaries in Voice ..... 12

#### COVER PHOTO



From top-left: Prof. Marcus Hess, Prof. Steve Zeitels, Prof. Janice Chapman, Kenneth Bozeman, Christina Shewell, Jeremy Fisher and Dr Gillyanne Kayes, Dame Sarah Connolly.



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## GUEST EDITORIAL by BVA President Craig Lees



Craig Antony Lees (BVA President)

The past 18 months has seen the BVA reach many new milestones. In June 2020 we launched our first online study day (Healthy Mind, Healthy Voice), an event which paved the way for a year-long series of virtual meetings, featuring notable speakers from around the world. In July 2020 we released our first series of 'on demand' content in the shape of our 'Keynote Conversations' videos. In March 2021, we launched the 'Professional Voice Network' (PVN), which aims to connect our members to like-minded practitioners in their local area, with the hope of fostering new relationships, research, and sharing best practice. Lastly, in April 2021 we were thrilled to welcome our first new patron in over seven years, Dame Sarah Connolly.

However, we are not stopping there. As many of you will already be aware, this September the BVA will host its first ever multidisciplinary virtual conference. After almost two years of planning and development, the event will feature over 40 hours of lectures, workshops and masterclasses from some of the world's top practitioners. From the outset, the delegate experience has been hugely important to us. Above all, we are keen to take advantage of the accessibility that the virtual format offers, whilst maintaining the tactile excitement and sense of community that only a physical conference can provide. To help us achieve this we've partnered with award-winning UK based events company Worldspan to create a bespoke environment that will allow delegates to watch and review each session, ask questions, network with one another and connect with exhibitors from around the world.

Alongside a wealth of practical workshops and academic papers, the first day of the conference will feature a two-part Keynote presentation from Professor Markus Hess, discussing refined endoscopic diagnostics and non-sedated interventions in the office, followed by a case-study led session, to be co-presented with Jacob Lieberman DO. We will welcome the British Association of Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM) to offer an insight into cross-disciplinary approaches to voice care for performing artists. The Performing Arts Medicine Association will then deliver a four-part lecture series covering issues surrounding athletes and the arts, management of performance anxiety, and the neurological impact of injury for performers.

Day two offers more notable workshops and masterclasses. In particular, we are thrilled to welcome Professors Steven Zeitels and Kenneth Bozeman, and Dr Gillyanne Kayes and Jeremy Fisher. The British Laryngological Association to provide an update on multidisciplinary approaches to dealing with chronic cough.

The third day will feature yet more exciting workshops and academic papers with topics from medicine and microsurgery to artistic persona and public speaking. It will also feature a Keynote presentation and practical workshop from author and speech therapist Christina Shewell, a masterclass with the

*Continues on page 8...*



# SECRETS OF THE SPOKEN VOICE

Friday 16th & Saturday 17th April 2021  
Presented online via Zoom



WORLD VOICE DAY 2021

Reviewed by Molly Parker

## A celebration of voices across the globe

April 16th came around and I very excitedly logged on to join the BVA's 'Secrets of Spoken Voice' (still in my pyjamas, of course). I immediately felt a warmth of support through my screen as Barbara Houseman provided a truthful and much needed space. She took us through the importance of mindfulness in voice work, reminding us that an exercise is only as good as your approach to it. Her emphasis on 'presence' couldn't have been more relevant to the multiple faces in tiny squares on my screen, all taking a moment to feel connected and present as a group (despite being in separate bedrooms). While I would have adored the opportunity to try out some more practical work, the knowledge that she shared allowed me to elevate my mindset outside of the confines of my flat and into the future – a really special start to the weekend.

Joanna Weir Ouston's workshop set out to give ideas of Kristin Linklater's progression and how to tackle text. I was delighted to have the chance to follow a practical structure from the comfort of my own space. I found Joanna really clear and concise – a hard thing to be through Zoom. I will say however, that a lot of Linklater's work is based around imagery as it can help us connect to muscles we don't have conscious control over. While this works for me, for example, imagining the bones of my body really helps *me* to create space, I'm aware that neurodiverse individuals can struggle connecting to imagery. That's not to say that Linklater's practice is invalid for neurodiversities, but I do think as a coach, giving multiple ways of approaching an imagery-based progression can make a huge difference. Overall, I think this workshop absolutely succeeded in its goal to give ideas of Linklater's progression and tackling text.

The last workshop I had the pleasure of attending was Matthew Dudley's 'Moving and Being Moved: Finding Freedom and Ease with Fitzmaurice Voicework'. I loved

this session as it seemed to echo the heart of Houseman's discussion on presence as well as offering practical elements. I felt very at ease as we were constantly reminded to take everything at our own pace and to our comfort level. There was a strong awareness that many of the tiny faces on the call had been staring at screens for the whole weekend as Dudley encouraged our eyes to focus on three-dimensional objects in our surroundings, which I very much appreciated. By the end of Dudley's workshop, I came out with a very clear idea of what Fitzmaurice's voice work involves and most excitingly, it gave me an urge to learn more about the work.

Overall, the BVA's 'Secrets of Spoken Voice' workshop was a wonderful celebration of voice on World Voice Day. While this year has been tough, especially for voice practitioners, there was something magical about tapping into the wonders of communication across the globe. While I do still question some of the work's accessibility to neurodiverse audiences, on the whole, I felt extremely looked after and filled with gratitude (and yes, staying in my pyjamas for the weekend was a big plus for me!).

*Molly Parker is completing a Masters degree in Vocal Studies: Teaching and Coaching at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.*

**FRIDAY 16th and SATURDAY 17th APRIL 2021**

**BVA @home**

## SECRETS OF THE SPOKEN VOICE

The BVA is proud to support actors, public speakers and voice over artists with our next big online event: a series of short workshops on 16th and 17th April 2021. This is an entirely practical event – not a PowerPoint in sight!

**FREE EVENT** **FRIDAY 16th APRIL 2021 – WORLD VOICE DAY**  
7.30pm – 8.30pm  
**BARBARA HOUSEMAN: The Communicative Heart of Voicework**

**SATURDAY 17th APRIL 2021 (2pm – 6.30pm)**

<p>2.30pm – 3.30pm <b>MATT DUDLEY</b> Moving and Being Moved – Finding Freedom and Ease with Fitzmaurice Voicework®</p> <p>3.45pm – 4.45pm <b>YVONNE MORLEY-CHISHOLM</b> Holding the Mirror Up to Nature</p>	<p>5.00pm – 6.00pm <b>JOANNA WEIR OUSTON</b> Linklater Voice Work</p> <p>6.00pm – 6.30pm <b>Panel discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members <b>EARLY BIRD</b> £30 (after March 16th £35)</li> <li>• Non-members <b>EARLY BIRD</b> £45 (after March 16th £50)</li> <li>• Students* <b>EARLY BIRD</b> £20 (after March 16th £25)</li> </ul> <p>*Students must be in full-time education to qualify.</p>
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**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Friday 16th April workshop with Barbara Houseman is FREE to attend (although you must sign up to participate). The prices above relate to the event on Saturday 17th April 2021. Further details on the website.

**zoom** **the british voice association**

**www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk**

# How BVA members supported WORLD VOICE DAY 2021



**Jane Oakshott**  
Leeds, UK

WORLD VOICE DAY 2021

*"Voice – and in particular finding an authentic voice – is central to our work and we are proud to be associated with World Voice Day and the BVA."* Peter Spafford, Director of Words at Chapel FM, a forward-thinking arts centre and community radio station with both a local focus and global audience.

Peter interviewed Louise Gibbs, (jazz singer, teacher and President-elect of the BVA), and me (Jane Oakshott, actor, director and member of the BVA Council) for Chapel FM's popular 'Love the Words' programme. This was just one part of Chapel FM's World Voice Day celebrations.

The focus of our joint contribution was on keeping the voice healthy, physically and mentally. Our voice identifies us as much as our face or body, but most people don't think about their voice until something goes wrong. That's fine, as Louise made clear: "If your voice is doing what it needs to for you, then blissful ignorance is where we all need to be."

But as many of us know, we can be anxious about speaking publicly, or feel self-conscious and unhappy with the sound of our voice, especially at a time when many of us are working so much online.

It wasn't all theorising; there was practical help too. Louise emphasised keeping the voice hydrated, and offered an essential two-step warm up: running on the spot for 30 seconds, and humming sensuously, "thinking of something nice but naughty – like chocolate"! Her musical demo of vowels from around the world (a Yorkshire 'e', an Italian 'i', a Nigerian 'o') was a piece of fun, playing between speaking and singing to increase vocal resonance and dynamic range.

I suggested the 'Consonant Rap' as an ultra-simple exercise for clarity which will work for anyone: "Take any consonant, say it extra firmly, make it into a rhythm, have fun." A case of *do-do-be-do* try this at home!

Singing and spoken voice specialists naturally have different takes on exact approaches to, and the focus, of voice work, but we were in lively agreement on the importance of voice for mental health, on the value of different accents, and on the sheer physical pleasure to be found in articulating words.

Further information about the contributors:

[louisegibbs.co.uk](http://louisegibbs.co.uk)

[janeoakshott.co.uk](http://janeoakshott.co.uk)

Chapel FM radio 'Listen Again' <https://www.chapelfm.co.uk/elfm-player/archive/2021/04/lovethewords-139/1>

## **Aline Camenzind** SingStimmZentrum, Switzerland

As a speech and voice therapist as well as a classical singer/singing teacher, I work for SingStimmZentrum Zürich, Switzerland ([www.ssz.ch](http://www.ssz.ch)). We are a medical center for the interdisciplinary diagnosis and treatment of voice disorders, consisting of the medical specialist in phoniatrics Dr. Salome Zwicky (director), several ENT specialists, singing teachers (classical, chanson, pop, musical), speech/voice therapists, a psychologist and two of the team offering manual therapy of the larynx according to Jacob Lieberman.

For World Voice Day 2021 we recorded a video (see links below) featuring all of us saying, in Swiss German: "All of us from SingStimmZentrum Zürich say hello from Switzerland" (phonetically written: "Meer fom Sing Shtim Tsentrum Tsurry gruesses us de Shweets!") – and then singing to the Happy Birthday tune: "Happy World Voice Day!". The video is meant to show the variety of voices according to this year's WVD motto: "One World – Many Voices." And, of course, it wants the viewer to remember the importance of a healthy voice. It is a call to celebrate the miracle of voice.

longer version (36 sec)

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/a94f1q59iic1vgh/SSZZ\\_WVD.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/a94f1q59iic1vgh/SSZZ_WVD.mp4?dl=0)

shorter version (16 sec)

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/ai7pu5vdt4eip78/SSZZ\\_WVD%20kurz.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ai7pu5vdt4eip78/SSZZ_WVD%20kurz.mp4?dl=0)

*Participants in the seminar hosted jointly by BRAVI and Santa Fe Lirica*





## Philip Salmon England, Spain, Argentina

*A collaboration between Santa Fe Lirica (Susana Caligaris) and BRAVI (British-Argentine Voice Initiative, Philip Salmon).*

On World Voice Day we took the opportunity to hold an international seminar (virtually, of course) reflecting on the many and various aspects of the singing voice. The objective was specifically not to talk about technique, or to give 'tips', but to promote a wider-ranging conversation. Short talks were given by Prof. Begonya Torres Gallardo from the Facultad de Medicina, University of Barcelona; Prof. Nicolás Alessandrini, University of Madrid; Prof. Camila Beltramone, La Plata University; speech therapist Virginia Zangroniz; Luchi de Gyldenfeldt, National University of the Arts, Argentina; Prof. Susana Caligaris, National University of Litoral, Santa Fe. The subjects, beginning with the corporeal integration of the physical act of singing, moved through the cognitive effects of, and on, singing, and the importance of an interdisciplinary approach, to reminders that the voice is something we are, not just something we do, and to take time to study and inform ourselves – no shortcuts!

My own talk concerned a singer's quest for authenticity, in their own voice and in performance.

The 40 attendees included other heads of department in Argentina and singers of all levels, and the discussion that emerged centred on the importance of the role of the voice in identity, including (or perhaps especially) for the trans singer, as performer and as human individual. There was the discovery of much shared ground.

There were a lot of laughs along the way, and the final conclusion of a fascinating and motivating seminar acknowledged the importance of having such a space in which to be able to exchange ideas, especially under present conditions.

## Annie Elias Kent UK

I put an announcement of the day onto our Kent Community Health NHS Trust intranet which went to all community staff across most of Kent. We also added 'The Virtual Voice' leaflet from the BVA. The communications we put out encouraged any member of staff who was having difficulty with their voice, especially since working online, to contact us for some support. We have had some enquiries and will be able to offer advice and access to our Voice Clinics and to therapy.

## Vetta Wise, Suffolk and Rebecca Moseley-Morgan, Oxfordshire, with singers from the UK, Italy and South Africa

Celebratory masterclasses with were held over two full afternoons on Zoom, on Friday - World Voice Day - and Sunday of the same weekend, with participants from the UK, Italy and South Africa. We had 16 singers at each, and we celebrated their voices, commenting briefly on each. We also had a listening 'audience', who participated in the group sessions. We did a warm up and cool down at each, and two other sessions of practical vocal group work interspersed through each afternoon. The collaboration and conversations between two teachers of singing seem to have been particularly productive and enjoyed by the diverse group. (We had everyone from people singing solo for the first time to experienced singers.) We raised a glass to the phenomenon of the human voice, and it was wonderful to be able to have an international flavour in each group.



Vetta Wise



Vetta and Rebecca's international masterclass



Rebecca Moseley-Morgan

## Emma Winscom Worcestershire, UK

On World Voice Day 2021, as last year, I posted the BVA leaflets and poster on my Voiceblog. You can find the blog at [emmawinscomsing.com](http://emmawinscomsing.com)

I started it last year to help lift the spirits of singing colleagues and clients – and as a means for people to feel connected. I hope there is something in it for everyone.

## Michelle Meikle Speech and Language Therapist, Isle of Man

Although the Community Health Centre was quieter than usual, I did manage to talk with some interested members of the public and provide handouts. The remainder of the handouts

are now in our speech therapy waiting room, which will be extremely useful.

It was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of looking after our voices as well as the SLT's role in voice care.

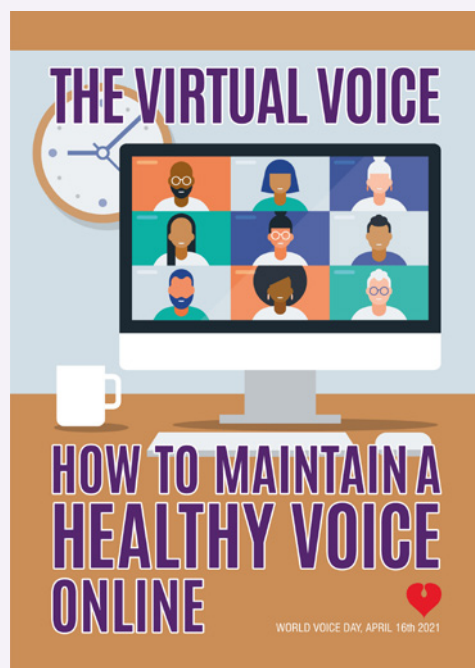


Michelle Meikle

## The British Voice Association's contribution to World Voice Day 2021

The British Voice Association has added further to its collection of information leaflets in honour of the occasion. The title of the 2021 leaflet is **'The Virtual Voice: How to maintain a healthy voice online'**. Video meetings are now an integral part of life during the pandemic, but they can be vocally challenging due to inadequate visual and auditory reception, issues caused by latency, and the increased effort required to process elements of non-verbal communication.

This new leaflet has been circulated to our membership and is available for the public to download from [www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk/free.htm](http://www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk/free.htm)



## Voiceblog:

Index

- 23rd. April, 2021 -

Shakespeare's Birthday

'A Midsummer Night's Dream', Act II, Scene I

A wood near Athens. A fairy speaks:

Over hill, over dale,  
Thorough bush, thorough brier,  
Over park, over pale,  
Thorough flood, thorough fire,  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moone's sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green.  
The cowslips tall her pensioners be:  
In their gold coats spots you see;  
Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
In those freckles live their savours:  
I must go seek some dew-drops here,  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
Farewell, thou lob of spirits: I'll be gone:  
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.



'Cowslips'

© Emma Winscom - 20th. April, 2021

The following exquisite arrangement of 'Over hill, over dale' is by Amy Beach and is sung by the stunning Etherea Vocal Ensemble:

['Over hill, over dale',  
sung by the Etherea Vocal Ensemble](#)

[Go to Emma's main web site](#)

(above) Post from Emma Winscom's Voiceblog

World Voice Day is celebrated annually on 16th April. The idea began in Brazil and then spread to the USA. The idea is to celebrate healthy voices and highlight the importance of voice at work and in society.



# Facilitating the Empowerment of Transgender Voices Through Singing

By Alex Pullinger

Singer, singing teacher and trans advocate Alexander Pullinger has been examining the endemic use of gendered language in classical music. In this summary of his research (funded by Sound Connections), he argues that the typically binary vocabulary of many choral settings needs a rethink. The implications for organised singing and society as a whole are potentially profound.

## Key terms:

- **Cisgender:** (or 'cis') anyone who is not transgender (from Latin *cis*, meaning 'same')
- **Transgender:** (or 'trans') anyone whose gender does not match the gender they were assigned at birth (from Latin *trans*, meaning 'on the other side of')
- **Sex:** often refers to a person's body type or anatomy; can describe their hormonal make-up
- **Gender:** an individual experience of maleness, femaleness, a combination or lack of both entirely
- **Assigned at birth:** the process of a doctor determining a baby's gender based on its sex (genitalia)
- **Non-binary:** anyone whose gender is not exclusively male or female
- **Gender expression:** how a person outwardly expresses their gender (eg clothing)
- **Voice type:** 'a group of voices with similar vocal ranges, capable of singing in a similar tessitura, and with similar vocal transition points'\*; mostly the product of sex hormones

\* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voice\\_type](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voice_type))

As we know, group singing improves mental health, actively promotes a connection to the body, and encourages social inclusion. Difficulties in these areas disproportionately impact the transgender population. In my work as a freelance singer, I have seen that transgender people encounter significant barriers to accessing singing, originating primarily from entrenched, cisgendered expectations about voice type ('men sing low, women sing high').

Such assumptions are well-established in choral singing, where we frequently hear of 'men's voices' (tenors and basses) and



Alex Pullinger

'women's voices' (sopranos and altos). These expectations lead to highly gendered and/or cisgendered singing environments, in which voices are both divided along gender lines, and presumed to belong to people with a particular body type. However, voice type is a product of sex hormones and is not defined by gender, so assigning a gender to the voice does not make logical sense – even if it might seem simpler to do so.

As a result of these expectations, an activity that could specifically benefit transgender people is largely unavailable to many of them. Those who do manage to access singing may find the environment to be inhospitable or unsafe, to the point where they have to leave and do not return.

There are examples of transgender singers who achieve high levels of success, but these are rare. Recently, BBC News described transgender opera singer Adrian Angelico as 'one of the few trans male opera singers in the world'. He revealed that opera helped him to realise he was transgender.<sup>1</sup> This is a testament to the tremendous potential of singing to empower transgender people. However, the rarity of openly transgender singers in prominent positions does indicate that there is not yet widespread acceptance among the public or within singing institutions. A significant number of those who achieve success, such as Adrian Angelico, have only come out after becoming established whilst perceived to be cis. He and other transgender opera singers such as Lucia Lucas<sup>2</sup> and Holden Madagame<sup>3</sup> recall their initial concerns that transitioning would end their careers. Crucially, this highlights the fact that many transgender people are not out, because of fear of discrimination and attack.<sup>4</sup> Therefore it is possible that there are many more transgender opera singers who have not come out.

As we can see, cisgendered expectations within the genre can and do have a significant impact on whether or not transgender singers feel they can work without facing negative consequences. Such expectations also prevent many transgender people from accessing singing lessons, auditions and organised singing environments in the early stages, opportunities that would provide the encouragement and experience needed to reach the top level. It is not possible to tell if someone is transgender by looking at them, so singing spaces need to be made trans-inclusive regardless of any assumptions

about who is present. This will not only improve trans access to singing, but will also have a positive impact on cisgender singers as rigid expectations around gender are eased.

Below are some practicable strategies to make singing environments more trans-inclusive:

## Raising awareness in singing teachers and music directors

It is vital that singing teachers and music directors develop trans-awareness and do not place a burden on the transgender student or colleague for education about gender identity. A key resource is *The Singing Teacher's Guide to Transgender Voices* (Jackson Hearn and Kremer). The significant cost of this text may be prohibitive for many individuals, so it falls to institutions to obtain copies for their libraries.

## Use of language

The use of gendered language in rehearsals immediately dictates how the group relates to voice types. For cisgender singers with higher voices, being referred to as 'ladies' will probably not be noticeable to those who do identify that way. But for those who do not, for example transgender men, it can be profoundly distressing and invalidating. The same applies to transgender women with lower voices being referred to as 'men'. Further to this, choirs described as 'for men' or 'for women' have the potential to deter non-binary singers altogether, as well as those who have a voice type more typically associated with a different gender. All this can be avoided by referring to singers by voice type or grouping, eg sopranos/tenors/upper voices/lower voices, etc.

## Concert dress codes

Concert dress codes are typically divided along binary, gendered lines (eg black trousers and jacket for men, black skirt and blouse for women). This can be distressing and alienating for many transgender people, who might not conform to cisgendered expectations; by definition, a binary, gendered dress code excludes non-binary gender expression. One solution is to have the same clothing options, without indicating that any particular combination is for men or women. This gives singers the freedom to choose clothing that is appropriate and comfortable, while adhering to the dress code.

## Auditions

At present, auditions largely take place under the assumption that auditionees of a certain voice type will also be a certain gender. This is a potential barrier to transgender people who, in the context of their gender, will often have a voice type the audition panel might not be expecting. As singer and activist CN Lester suggests, members of the panel may also have absorbed prejudices against transgender people, as held by wider society. To minimise the impact of these prejudices, blind auditions for the first round would be a helpful approach.<sup>5</sup> I should stress that singing spaces must be made accommodating to transgender people before, and not after, they have been encouraged to apply. This is because, otherwise, a well-intentioned openness to transgender applicants could unwittingly invite them into the transphobic, and potentially unsafe, environment they sought to avoid in the first place.

To some, the idea of overhauling all classical singing environments for the benefit of a small minority might seem extreme. However, removing oppressive restrictions on the most vulnerable benefits all of us. It will bring diversity of lived experience (meaning richer musical offerings), and foster greater compassion. Ultimately it will allow all of us the freedom to express ourselves without being bound to rigid gender norms about what we can wear, whose voices can be heard, and whose stories can be told.

*Alex is a professional singer, singing teacher, and advocate for trans awareness, inclusion and rights. This article is a summary of a research paper funded by Sound Connections, an arts engagement consultancy. The full report is available to download here: [www.sound-connections.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Trans-inclusion-article-FINAL.pdf](http://www.sound-connections.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Trans-inclusion-article-FINAL.pdf)*

*A condensed version is available here: <https://britishmusiccollection.org.uk/article/empowering-transgender-voices-through-singing>*

*[www.alexanderpullinger.co.uk](http://www.alexanderpullinger.co.uk)*

1. [www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-57275103](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-57275103)
2. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQF5WqkNHAw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQF5WqkNHAw)
3. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTtk-DIJ22c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTtk-DIJ22c)
4. [www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Trans-Hate-Crime-Report-2020.pdf](http://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Trans-Hate-Crime-Report-2020.pdf)
5. [www.nationaloperastudio.org.uk/news/taking-to-the-stage-life-as-a-trans-opera-singer](http://www.nationaloperastudio.org.uk/news/taking-to-the-stage-life-as-a-trans-opera-singer)

## Guest Editorial by BVA President Craig Lees

*Continued from page 2*

renowned singing teacher Professor Janice Chapman and an informal Q&A session with BVA patron Dame Sarah Connolly. This final day will also feature the BVA AGM and the Van Lawrence Award session.

In addition to all of this, the BVA is also thrilled to offer all delegates complimentary access to the Collegium Medicorum Theatri (CoMeT) annual conference, which runs simultaneously to Choice For Voice. CoMeT comprises voice professionals from cities across the world who are connected with major theatres, opera

companies, or conservatoires. The organisation seeks to encourage scientific investigation, further clinical studies, exchange knowledge and ideas, and develop educational activities in the field of professional voice care medicine.

Their programme is in three sessions: Covid Aerosols and Phoneticians, Cutting Edge Surgery and Artistic Voice.

A full list of workshops, papers and posters is available on the BVA website, alongside an 'at a glance' programme that shows the lineup of each day. Louise Gibbs explains more about the networking opportunities and logistics of the conference can be found on page 12.

I do hope you will consider joining us for what promises to be an unmissable, one-of-a-kind event.

Warmest wishes,  
**Craig Antony Lees**



# PSYCHOLOGY OF VOICE DISORDERS: SECOND EDITION

Deborah Caputo Rosen, Johnathan  
Brandon Sataloff, Robert T Sataloff  
Plural Publishing, 2021, San Diego, CA  
Hardcover, 432 pages  
ISBN13: 978-1-63550-235-0

Reviewed by  
Marissa Steer

Psychology of Voice Disorders is an academic book aimed at the professional voice user or medic. Undergraduates of voice or psychology will also find this book a valuable resource. The book comprises 20 chapters of incredibly well referenced research offering a combination of overviews, case studies and explanations of areas of study and concerns of the human voice and its interactions with the human mind.

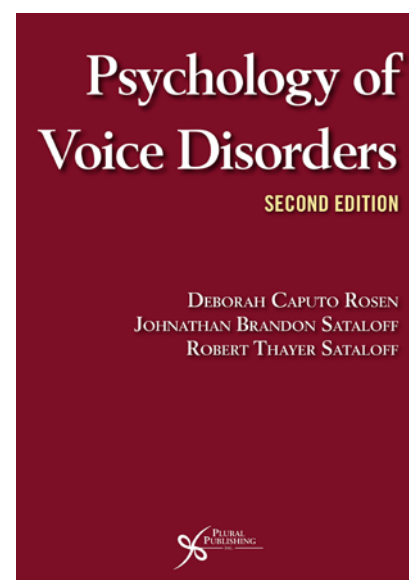
The authors are all reassuringly active in the field of psychology, voice and music. Dr Deborah Caputo Rosen is a licensed clinical psychologist and registered nurse, specialising in health equity and communication. She serves on the editorial board of Journal of Voice and is also a certified practitioner of Eriksonian hypnosis and neuro-linguistic programming. Johnathan Brandon Sataloff is a musician and poet; impressively he is also a published clinical fellow in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

Robert Thayer Sataloff is professor and academic chair in otolaryngology at Drexel University College of Medicine, and holds professorships in Thomas Jefferson University, adjunct clinical professor at Temple University and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine; he is also a staff member of the Academy of Vocal Arts, Philadelphia. A Doctor of Musical Arts in Voice Performance, his career is musical as well as medical. He is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Voice Foundation and the American Institute for Voice and Ear Research, among numerous other accomplishments. The collective professional knowledge of the authors is extremely impressive and offers the reader a really comprehensive evaluation of the subject.

The book offers access to areas of professional knowledge and expertise that may not be generally available to the voice coach, psychologist or therapist. It is rare that a UK patient will experience the simultaneous care of a psychologist, speech therapist and vocal coach. It's more likely that any one of those professionals may be leading the care package for a patient individually. The authors are US professionals and the anecdotal case studies in this book relate to the US medical healthcare system and practices. The UK system varies in terms of medical assessment process, diagnosis and treatment plans. British-based readers might want to consider how budgets and treatments are managed differently to the authors' accounts.

Psychology of Voice Disorders appears serious in its format with a maroon hardback cover and bold white text title, hinting towards it being a resource for medical students. The language and subject itself require a certain level of medical knowledge and academic practice. It is safe to say that the book is not for someone just considering a voice coaching practice or who is at the early stages of their psychology studies. It is definitely aimed more towards those with a reasonably developed knowledge of anatomy, medical practice and the practical world of the professional voice user.

That said, many singing teachers nowadays find that their private practice is becoming a more holistic therapy for their clients. Many 21st century singing teachers and voice coaches are finding that they provide an informal style of emotional counselling to a varied clientele of stressed professional singers, exhausted adults looking for creative output in their busy life, young adults with diagnosed anxiety disorders and other common mental health diagnosis. I know from personal experience as a university music lecturer and private singing teacher that mental health awareness is ever more present in and out of the classroom. Students are now more open about mental health diagnoses. For this reason I would heartily recommend Psychology of Voice Disorders to the established singing teacher or voice coach who is seeking to develop their knowledge of the psychological demands placed on their singing students, or who wants to



provide a well prepared and safe learning environment for their singers who present with mental health concerns.

Each of the 20 chapters is insightful and packed with vital detail for the voice practitioner. While the chapter headings appear academically dense and possibly overwhelming they each really provide an accessible and readable synopsis of a particular area of either; psychology and its effect on voice, voice and its effect on psychology, or the medical assessment and diagnosis process. For example chapter 5, 'Common Medical Diagnoses and Treatments in Patients with Voice Disorders' is invaluable for music leaders of large group classes or wellbeing choirs. Chapters 6 and 7 provide bitesize explanations of the side effects of medication on both the voice and the mind, information which will again help the teacher to support singers who might rely on prescribed medication which limits their vocal ability. Rosen et al offer clear definitions and terminology with incredibly well referenced examples of published peer reviewed studies, assuring the reader that their work is not a philosophical soft science but is academically informed and grounded in medical fact. Further chapters cover topics of neurological illness and voice, trauma, cancer and cancer treatment, stress management, performance anxiety and art therapies, all of which add huge value to the overall relevance of the book to the contemporary voice professional.

*Marissa Steer is a singing teacher and lecturer in music.*

# TRAINING THE CONTEMPORARY COMMERCIAL SINGER

Elizabeth Ann Benson

Compton Publishing, Braunton, 2020

Softcover, 300 pps

ISBN 978-1-909082625

Reviewed by  
Jonathan Gunthorpe

Elizabeth Ann Benson's book presents the collected experiences, approaches and opinions of 26 pedagogues working in the CCM field, in all genres covered by the term. The generosity of these contributors in their openness and willingness to share is striking and the author should be congratulated on the achievement of securing their participation. This book is comprehensively referenced and serves as a resource for deeper reading into methodologies that are trade-marked, or applications from vocal science still in their development.

A broad spectrum of views is apparent from the start, set out in a clear, intuitive section progression covering: 'Approaches', 'Elements of training', 'Special demands from the industry' and 'Aesthetic context'. Whilst philosophies and core values in teaching are for the most part aligned, opinions diverge considerably in many of the chapters covering technical elements. Patterns

emerge for each contributor and those readers who favour the comparative approach to their teaching and learning will enjoy picking through them, joining the dots here and beyond. Eighty-four per cent of the contributors are said to have had a classical training. Many of them still press bruises from the experience. The frustrations felt are common for those who were subjected to singularly dogmatic approaches, unable to benefit from the wealth of continued input from the vocal science and cross-referenced methodologies we now enjoy. It is through this, the technical area of the book, and the aforementioned philosophies and core values, that we might see a softening of the "us and them" tensions, long apparent between classical and CCM pedagogies. Rigidity in the parameters of accepted classical sounds is taken as a given by some contributors. A wider view might encompass the vocal demands made by contemporary composers and research done on the pre-Romantic voice.

An interest in how the voice can function in any genre is fast becoming an imperative for many voice professionals. Elizabeth Ann Benson does not shy away from difficult questions at the core of this. Whilst these questions are centred around the US education system and subsequent employment prospects for young artists, there are some general, UK equivalents that pre-occupy those of us who serve conservatoire departments. What access do state schools have to vocal pedagogy that can discern between and enthuse

of training such as breath, support, registration, belt and vowels, special industry demands (such as audio technology) and aesthetic content. Because text is quoted verbatim, each interviewee's personality, determination, beliefs and styles of teaching come across really well, and their respective passions for their craft shine out from every page. For simplicity, each chapter follows the same pattern: An introduction to each topic and a brief "analytical overview", interview content and recommended further reading, such as peer-reviewed literature references.

The book is written from a CCM-generic perspective, and whilst this benefits the reader who is interested in breadth of detail on a wide range of CCM genres (Classical teachers just branching out into teaching those styles, for example) it may frustrate those searching for teaching advice on specific styles such as rock and pop. Benson acknowledges



students in differing vocal genres? What are the longer-term implications for vocal training on any specific path? How can applicants be best prepared for auditions to tertiary institutions? How can those institutions best prepare students for their next stage of education or employment?

"Training Contemporary Commercial Singers" is a welcome addition to a sparsely populated section of the vocal pedagogy bookshelf. I hope that future editions, updated and augmented – perhaps with some contributors beyond the anglosphere – will follow.

*Jonathan Gunthorpe is Associate Head of Vocal and Operatic Studies and Vocal Pedagogy Lead at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.*

Reviewed by  
Jo Sear

Given that rock and pop singing has been around for over 70 years, and musical theatre, jazz and blues for even longer, it seems absurd that we CCM teachers are still scrabbling for a cohesive pedagogy in 2021. Nevertheless, as a recent journal article reminds us<sup>1</sup>, there remains a desperate clarion call for more CCM teaching literature. Elizabeth Ann Benson's book, though it falls short on analysis, is a good step in the right direction.

That there is valuable information here is not in doubt. The book incorporates interview data from 26 contributing authors from a wide range of CCM disciplines and from all over the world. It is an extensive work, with 23 chapters in all, clearly organised into sections on teaching approaches, elements

that full exploration of subjects such as agility training for runs/licks, tone onsets/offsets, percussive articulation, sound monitoring and playing an instrument and singing at the same time are "beyond the scope of this text", but all are arguably fundamental areas for rock, pop, soul or R&B teaching, which represents a sizeable chunk of CCM teaching.

There is much to be read, absorbed and enjoyed here – this book is a wonderful repository of the knowledge and experience of some truly inspiring and pioneering teachers. However, the bulk of its content is more reportage than analysis. As the book's back cover makes clear, "This is not so much a 'how to' but more of a 'how I'". Though its chapters offer useful content and collective wisdom, it seems a shame that an opportunity was missed here to connect the dots between theory and practice. Some important resources



and references are included at the end of each chapter, but they are listed as 'recommended reading' rather than used to corroborate the data itself. The 'Conclusions' chapter incorporates percentage charts on the experiences, opinions and choices of approaches across the 26 pedagogues interviewed but leaves readers to reach their own

verdicts on what might constitute a proven training plan.

Whilst the author's intention to present all approaches "with equal enthusiasm" is a laudable one, a deep dive into the factual content of the data would have been incredibly useful for those trying to establish the evidence-based

pedagogical pathway that the CCM industry truly deserves.

*Jo Sear is a rock, pop and soul specialist singer and singing teacher*

<sup>1</sup> Bartlett, I and Naismith, ML (2020) *An Investigation of Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) Voice Pedagogy: A Class of its Own?*, NATS Journal of Singing, Vol. 76 No. 3, pps 273-282.

## SING FROM YOUR CORE

Jole Berlage Buccellati  
Schott Music GmbH&Co, 2020  
Hardcover, 160 pages  
ISBN-10: 3959836120  
ISBN-13: 978-3959836128

Reviewed by  
Alessandra Testai

Jole Berlage Buccellati came to the study of the voice through an intriguing personal history which encompasses martial arts, biology, anthropology, piano and Theatre Studies; all this alongside a journey from her native Germany to the USA, then to London, and back to Germany, where she met her vocal inspiration in Tom Krause.

In her introduction, she describes her book as "addressed to all kinds of singers, from professionals to amateurs", and this is certainly a good book for any singer who wants to develop their creativity, expression and understanding of singing beyond what we can call a functional technique. Little in size, this is a portable guide to be made use of anywhere and at any time.

The book is clearly and helpfully laid out in sections. The first section begins by asserting the *core principle of this book*, "that singing has a lot more to do with body coherence and embodied communication than with a functional methodology that views a vocal body as a mechanical apparatus." She declares contemplation essential to a singer's awareness of such coherence. Then we have a specific paragraph on how to use the book, with advice on how to dip in and out. She suggests short length exercises, and draws the reader's attention to some questions to be pondered: they are described as "questions for contemplation".

Longer exercises are also given, and we can do as much extension work

as we like, by following online links to her website; some very helpful audio tracks can be found on [www.singfromyourcore.com](http://www.singfromyourcore.com)

The text is enriched with relevant and evocative quotes from various thinkers and artists, amongst them plenty from her own lessons with Tom Krause. Indeed she describes her aim as "to show that Tom Krause's method fits nicely into what science hypothesises...", and there is a chapter on the science behind it all, nicely packed with information. This chapter is very dense, and covers a lot of information in a short space so it may be challenging for some, although it is very interesting and worth the effort. But in any case, this potential difficulty is anticipated by the provision of a thorough bibliography, providing the reader with a range of options for further study.

Part One (The Vocal Body) is devoted to establishing a theoretical starting point: "basic concepts". Part Two (The Workbook) offers exercises intended to open up your instrument, with attention to resonators, posture and breath. Finally we get to the "core" of the title, and to play and engage with the fundamental concept in this teaching. Essentially, this is the integration of physical, mental and emotional development in the study of singing, both for the student and the established performer.

As a singer and teacher I came to 'Sing from your Core' with some trepidation, having explored many 'alternative' singing methods; perhaps I was unnecessarily on my guard against another vague 'new age' approach. If so, these doubts were not justified, because this book offers a solid and practical perspective on singing technique. For the experienced singer it will be a useful reminder of how and why we do it, and I would not hesitate to recommend it to the intelligent young singer who has perhaps had enough of more academic approaches. Both will find food for thought in this attractive little book.



Jole Berlage-Buccellati

*Sing from Your Core*

The Vocal Body

SCHOTT

I would also congratulate the author and Schott, the publisher, for setting it out with neurodiversity in mind, making clever use of visuals and emojis, facilitating both emotional and intellectual contact when the text might be challenging. They could, however, have found a better and bigger font from this point of view, as their choice is not as readable as it is handsome. I've met so many dyslexic singers in my career!

I'll leave you with a quote from Tom Krause that says it all in my own language: "Non toccare la diva" – leave the diva alone – the diva being of course your natural voice. I am happy to recommend this book as a helpful companion along the way.

*Alessandra Testai is an Italian soprano and singing teacher based in Britain. Her path crossed Jole Berlage Buccellati's own trajectory in this country without ever meeting her! She studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and subsequently with several teachers quoted by Jole, particularly with Laura Sarti MBE FGS.*

# CHOICE FOR VOICE 2021:

## Crossing Boundaries in Voice

**Virtual 3-day conference:  
3-5th September 2021**

### Conferencing in a changed world

Many of us are now well acquainted with the advantages of communicating nationally and internationally without leaving home, or even getting out of our pyjamas. The world has shrunk. While the pandemic has forced Choice for Voice 2021 online, we really do want to make sure that your socially distanced, small screen experience will be as intimate and rewarding as the usual face-to-face format.

There's no doubt that presenting Choice for Voice 2021 online is a challenge. How can we capture the buzz of serendipitous conversations with far-flung friends and colleagues in the coffee queue? Or replicate those spontaneous and intense clusters of discussion in the hallway, sandwich in hand? Many of us know how conference energy and connection can shape a life's work. So it's that buzz of live engagement that the BVA conference team and its online events partner, Worldspan, will be working hard to bring to you in September.

Choice for Voice 2021 offers content as rich and diverse as any live conference - perhaps even more - as we take you directly into the clinics and studios of our presenters across the globe to access the latest wisdom on voice. As you'd expect, workshops and papers are at set times in the conference timetable. Academic papers, pre-recorded and grouped by theme, will be followed by a live Q&A with the author(s) and moderator in a 'collaboration room'. If needed, there's a polling facility to gauge the opinions of the audience or garner feedback.

On the assumption that most delegates are by now familiar with 'chat' and 'breakout room' facilities, all workshops will be run fully live on Zoom. Given the range of topics (from stroboscopy to yoga and much in between), and what can go wrong for even the most experienced contributors, Worldspan is working with individual workshop leaders on bespoke

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2021

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solutions to get their message across whilst involving *you*. Even the potentially static format of the poster is expanded and revitalised through the possibility of links to live audiovisual resources and author contact.

For the programme overall, a virtual notice board notifies you of titles and timings; a chat page allows you to share a thought or a photo. There's a networking 'space'. But perhaps the best way to navigate through the conference will be by thinking of each presentation title as pointing you to an accessible portal through which the abstract, supporting materials, links, information on the author(s) and contacts can all be found. Once entered, you could ask questions, add comments, leave a message, and start networking.

Most importantly, for contributors and delegates who are unfamiliar with (and perhaps a little afraid of) online conferencing, there are prompts, a written guide, a Choice for Voice 2021 team and a real live person to technically assist each session. If you're having a problem, don't hesitate to ask! Should you feel overwhelmed, find you can't be in two places at once, or want a recap in your own time, all content is available to delegates for 60 days beyond the conference dates.

I look forward to seeing you there!

**Louise Gibbs**  
BVA President-elect

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\* Proof of full-time student status will be required at the point of booking