

Kate Sawyer

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Teaching Philosophy

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A Voice To Call Your Own

As all studied singers experience, I have had many types of teachers: the poet who speaks in metaphor only, the diagram scribbler who only speaks in technical jargon, the nature goddess who vibrates with the universe during warm-ups. ALL of these approaches can be effective, depending on the student, or maybe even the day of the week.

My goal in every voice lesson or rehearsal is to help the singer into a moment of freedom. The naked voice, or free voice, is one that can spontaneously line up, given the proper physical conditions.

I impress upon my students that the natural breath can be our most friendly breath, and that singing is elongated speech. When we practice speaking and intoning "on the breath", we find that natural "naked" connection to what singing is: a primal cry, a cave woman's call, a burst of laughter. I have found that, once that connection is made, a student has found the core of their sound, and a place where they are free to express in many vocal styles.

My students hear positive reinforcement from me, as well as reminders to take ownership. I cannot give them their sound. My hope for each student is that they can take the foundation of what they have learned and go to any teacher, knowing their value as a singing musician, and know what it feels like to have free expression to healthily make whatever sound they need for future repertoire.