

Whitney Wells

MUVC 560

Dr. Roberts

April 7th, 2020

Personal Philosophy

I truly believe that everyone who has a voice can sing. Indeed, music is a language of its own that touches our human hearts, and the voice is such a personal way of communicating. It is my goal as a voice teacher to equip my students with skills to help them feel confident in and love their own, unique voice. Whether students want to make music professionally, in a choir, as a hobby, in worship, or in their shower, my hope is that they can learn to love their voice and sharing it with others.

Each and every student is worthy of individual and personalized attention. Lessons are intentionally planned for every student since each person is different and unique. Teaching should be interactive and not just include the teacher speaking information at the student. I want to involve my students in the learning process and create dialogue at every lesson. People learn in many different ways, and it is a goal of mine to discover how my students learn best and work with those strengths.

My teaching is based in the Bel Canto tradition of singing, so long legato lines and pure vowels make for a good basis of singing. Good singing starts with good breathing, but is maintained through several techniques:

1. Constant breath energy – this is the continuous flow of breath that fuels legato singing. Rather than articulating each note with separate puffs of air, one consistent line of air creates an even and beautiful sound. The lower abdominal muscles are engaged to help with this and not the upper chest, throat, or larynx.
2. Free resonance – resonance is created by the space we have and make above our vocal chords. It's a balance of light and dark sound, and clarity comes from free and loose muscles and pure vowels.
3. Effective articulation – since a big part of singing is communicating, I believe that the articulation of words, and more specifically consonants, is an important element.

Effective articulation can come into play not only when resonance issues are solved, but also by learning the most effective and efficient way to sing language.

I am excited about teaching all kinds of students who want to sing in many different genres! Like many different art forms, I believe classical training provides the best foundation to be able to succeed in any style. However, I have no desire to force a student to sing repertoire they hate. Finding a balance of different repertoire – some that the student enjoys and some that the student can learn and grow from – is important.

Understanding and expression while singing is also something that is very important. More than just producing a beautiful sound, relaying a message or an emotion is vital in the communication that is involved in singing. I wish to work on dramatic interpretation and expression with my students, and working on ways to create authentic meaning that can be communicated to others.

Ultimately, I want all of my students to find their free and authentic sound, while learning to love their singing voice. This is a journey that certainly will not happen overnight. I am an encourager and love to see my students working hard and improving. However, improvement cannot take place without correction. In order to experience growth, I want to create a safe place in the studio to discuss both strengths and weaknesses and to relay honesty in an uplifting and constructive manner. It is my hope that throughout this journey, students will learn more about their voice and embrace the challenge of growth and the beauty of their own voice.