CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

This is a performance class designed for students with little or no solo vocal experience. It will cover primarily the beginnings of a sound vocal technique, and will include opportunities to experience more traditional literature for voice. It will be roughly divided into 2 areas: experiential (singing) and academic (talking about singing).

EXPERIENTIAL

Students will be required to sing a minimum of 3 times, solo, in front of the class, from memory! The following criteria will be used:

1. The first song will be the student's choice. Each of you should provide a copy of the song for the accompanist. Think of it as an audition for a role or part in a musical. What is ‘on display’ is how you produce your voice, how you deal with nerves singing in front of a group of your peers, and how your enjoyment of singing still shines through despite the nervousness of the situation. The song itself is almost immaterial.

2. After the first go-around, the instructor will choose a song for each student, based on what the student has shown vocally in class. These songs are technique pieces and derive usually from various repertoires: Italian Art songs, Popular songs, jazz standards, musical comedy selections, or classic Hawaiian mele. Students will be provided with the accompaniment for their songs, after which they are expected to practice at least 30 minutes a day. Practice rooms are available. Each time you sing in class, then, you are “raising” your own ‘technical bar’. You will come in each successive time with evidence of application of the technical knowledge and practice covered in class and attempted in the practice room.

3. If there's time for a 3rd song, it will be the student's choice, but it is recommended that this song come from the style of music that is of special interest to the individual student.

4. Everyone must learn and memorize “Hawai’i Aloha”, by Makua Laiana. As residents of our Island state, this song is the only one (even more than Hawai’i Pono’i) that is oftren sung at various gatherings, so we will use our voice class as a way to learn the words and meaning of this beautiful song.

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1 Note: examples of these songs are those written by composers such as Charles E. King, Queen Lili‘uokalani, Dave Nape, Mathew Kane, Dennis Kamakahi, Helen Desha Beamer, Helen Lindsey Parker, et al.
MAKING THE EFFORT

Of utmost importance will be for students to show that they are making an effort to apply some of the vocal concepts that we cover in class. Knowing that the acquisition of vocal technique is a slow process, the grading will be based more on the effort made by each student, NOT by whether or not the vocal concept is “in place” yet. Patience and perseverance are two qualities that are much needed by everyone right at the outset of the class. To earn an “A” in this class, students will have to sing at least 3 times solo in front of the class from memory. Singing with the lyrics is encouraged but students don’t get credit until it’s memorized. A major part of this class is for each student to articulate what he or she hears after a classmate sings. It will ultimately help their own singing after successive times trying to put their comments into words about hearing each other sing.

A great advantage of a Voice Class over private lessons is that the student potentially has repeated occasions to hear vocal instruction being directed at his or her peers, which often can help immeasurably in the understanding of a vocal concept that might apply to his or her own development as a singer. Taking notes in class, then, as you observe each other sing, can be of considerable significance for your own singing in the students quest for vocal excellence. Therefore,

ATTENDANCE AT EVERY CLASS IS MANDATORY!

There will be no such thing as an excused/unexcused absence. You are allowed 3 absences for any reason. After those three absences, your grade will be reduced by one entire letter per absence. Therefore, on absence number 4, your grade drops from an A to a B; on absence 5, from a B to a C; and, so forth.

Also, rehearsals and performances on the end of semester recital are mandatory. If you miss ANY of them, your grade will be reduced by a letter grade for each rehearsal/performance missed, regardless of reason.

ACADEMIC

Concert Review Paper

Each student will be required to attend a recital, church service or concert attendance. At this concert, there must be a vocal soloist on the program, on whose vocal performance will be what your review is focused. A 2-page, double space, computer generated paper of your comments on the singer and his/her performance is due by the end of the semester. Much of your grade for this paper will be based on how much you incorporate some of the vocal precepts that we cover in class.

This semester we will be adopting a new strategy of teaching Vocal Development. The first 12 weeks of the semester will be divided into 6 units of 2 weeks apiece. They will be divided into the following areas:

Unit 1: The Head (Voice, larynx, resonance, placement, mouth/throat/neck)
Unit 2: The Body (sternum, pelvis, feet, knees, solar plexus, balance, shoulders)
Unit 3: The Left Hemisphere of the Brain: Language (text, diction, vowels)
Unit 4: The Right Hemisphere of the Brain: Music (notation, melody/harmony)
Unit 5: What lies Behind (your influences, experience, previous training)
Unit 6: What lies Ahead (The Audience, your future Goals, Focus)
Each unit will include a vocabulary list on subjects and concepts that students will have to define and understand before moving to the next unit. Each student will maintain a journal (a spiral notebook, College ruled works perfectly) in which you will take notes and enter ideas and concepts about his or her understanding of what their voices is doing. There will be a quiz at the end of each 2 week period. See dateline at the end of this syllabus to see when the quizzes occur.
NOTA BENE: This is a ‘piggy-back’ class. For those students who are enrolled in Voice 2, there will be other assignments for your to accomplish in lieu of the quizzes that you took last semester. Much of the work will center on Unit 4: To the Right of the Brain – learning to read and write music.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

Your grades will be earned according to the following guidelines:
A. **200 points** - classroom participation (showing up, speaking up, good attitude, making constructive comments to your peers, etc.)
B. **200 points** - Concert Review Paper
C. **200 points** - quizzes and journal exercises
D. **400 points** – Solo singing both in class and onstage for the Final Ho‘ike Students should show consistent efforts at improving vocally, making sounds that are unfamiliar to you. Each song will be worth 100 points, in a combination of practicing and performing. The final song will also be worth 100 points
900 – 1000 = A
800 – 899 = B
700 – 799 = C
600 – 699 = D
599 & less = F

Activities Required at Scheduled Times Other Than Class Times

1. Attendance at a vocal recital or concert. Performer must be doing solo work, not as part of a group. Printed program or ticket stub required with critique.
2. Practice vocal exercises and songs at least 30 minutes daily outside of class. Please keep a log of practice times. There are practice rooms available in Hale Pālanakila: Rooms 103, 105 and 107. The system to use the practice rooms requires each student to go to the front desk of the library, leave their student ID, then take the key to open up the practice room, use it, then return to the key and retrieve their ID card.
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of this course, you should be able to:
1. Demonstrate some of the basics of a sound vocal technique, such as physical alignment, breath support, breath control, lack of jaw tension, tone production, and the importance of well-chosen vowels in your work as a singer.
2. Apply basic concepts of music theory, such as melody, harmony and rhythm, phrasing, musicality, and pitch accuracy in performances.
3. Exhibit growing confidence in public performance based on repeated performance singing in front of a group of peers in class, culminating in possibility of earning a spot on a semester-end vocal recital.

Note: this syllabus is subject to changes throughout the semester, but students will be notified when and if changes occur.

Revised January 9, 2016