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Debra Greschner

Montgomery, Cheri. *The Singer's Daily Practice Journal*. Nashville, TN: STM Publishing Company, 2018. Paper, 201 pp., \$25.00. ISBN 978-0-997557893
www.stmpublishers.com

Cheri Montgomery has authored a sizeable catalogue of books devoted to lyric diction. At first glance, it appears that her most recent publication, *The Singer's Daily Practice Journal*, diverges from the topics of pronunciation and phonetic transcription. Upon closer inspection, however, it is obvious the book skillfully blends the expertise manifested in her previous books with a carefully organized pedagogic approach. Montgomery's premise is that the beginning student (who usually receives weekly lessons) benefits from daily reinforcement of vocal concepts. The book is designed to keep the singer engaged in the singing process by serving as textbook, workbook, and journal. Given that Montgomery has written extensively on the topic of lyric diction, it is not surprising that the author asserts that

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the sounds of language are important pedagogic tools, and fluency in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) prepares students to sing repertoire in all languages. Accordingly, IPA exercises are the backbone of the book.

The small, spiral bound volume provides a fifteen week course of study. Each week contains activities for six days. For the first eleven weeks, the text and exercises focus on foundational principles of vocal technique (such as breath, posture, and tone) and the phonetic transcription of English. An overview of Italian, French, German, and Latin, including the principal attributes of each language, comprise the final four weeks. The text also includes guidance in stage deportment and vocal health. The weekly regimen begins with blank staves to notate exercises from the lesson, space to record daily notes and practice times, and a list of cross-referenced concepts from within the volume to review throughout the week.

The recommended readings are brief overviews of topics relevant to singers. Each lesson appears on the *verso*, with the corresponding IPA presented on the *recto*, thereby providing additional practice in phonetic transcription. The text is wide ranging; Montgomery quotes pedagogues such as Barbara Honn and William McIver, offers advice in identifying and addressing technical issues, and explains fundamental aspects of diction. Photographs of mouth formation for specific vowels are included, as well as diagrams of postural alignment and charts of vowels and consonants. Each chapter contains a quiz and an answer key, enabling students to check their understanding of the material. The pedagogic methodology contained in the book is summarized by the author in her paper, "The Voice and Diction

Connection: A Diction Instructor's Approach to Voice Pedagogy," previously published in this periodical (*Journal of Singing* 74, no. 3 [January/February 2018]: 313–321).

The Singer's Daily Practice Journal is an invaluable tool for the student of singing. It offers a structured approach to daily practice and reinforces a wide range of important pedagogic concepts. Both the size and the cost of the book make it accessible for students. With it, Montgomery has made another valuable contribution to the literature of voice pedagogy.

Bos, Nancy. *The Teen Girl's Singing Guide: Tips for Making Singing the Center of Your Life*. San Bernardino, CA: StudioBos, 2017. Paper, 209 pp., \$14.99. ISBN 978-1-973409113
www.studiobos.com/publishing

Over the past several decades, there has been a seismic shift among voice pedagogues regarding the instruction of young singers. The number of voice teachers who are willing to instruct children and pre-teens is steadily increasing, undoubtedly in direct proportion to the number of youths who are attracted to singing competitions and performance opportunities. Nancy Bos addresses a sizeable segment of this adolescent population in *The Teen Girl's Singing Guide*. Writing in a conversational and direct manner, she encourages teenage girls to evaluate what singing means to them. Based upon their responses, she suggests different paths of study.

The volume is presented in three sections. In the first part, the author provides space for the reader to assess and describe how important singing is to her, and instructs her to use the