

The Singer's Daily Practice Journal

Volume II: A graded introduction to diction
and musicianship using excerpts from Italian,
German, and French art song repertoire

Cheri Montgomery

S.T.M. Publishers
Nashville, TN

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Preface

The sounds of English, Italian, German, and French are ideal for developing the voice. This text pairs vocal training with musicianship, phrasing, and language study. Enunciation rules are presented using the International Phonetic Alphabet. The concepts needed to develop musicianship skills are introduced using excerpts from standard art song repertoire. These topics are presented simultaneously and in a graded order.

Volume II is intended for singers who wish to pursue formal voice training but lack adequate musical background. Many are unaware that they possess a special vocal ability until they reach adulthood. Then they find themselves searching for a voice teacher before gaining the musicianship skills needed to learn standard repertoire. Art song assignments are indispensable teaching tools. Attributes of the Italian, German, and French languages are ideal for optimizing the vibrancy of vowels, energizing the articulation of consonants, and enhancing the legato. With this text, the voice teacher can confidently proceed with lessons and assignments while the student studies diction and musicianship independently. The teacher can monitor progress by requiring the student to play or sing a randomly selected excerpt from the daily assignment pages.

Both volumes of *The Singer's Daily Practice Journal* combine textbook, workbook, and journal in one resource for voice students. Each section of the 15-week journal begins with manuscript paper for recording weekly lesson notes, exercises, and assignments. A grading rubric of vocal concepts is included. This gives the teacher a concise way of defining vocal development and communicating expectations. The rubric offers a less personal platform for critical assessment. Space is provided for the student to record progress and log daily practice times. A glossary of terms is included. Spoken and sung examples of all phonetic symbols are available on the listening page at www.stmpublishers.com.

Preface

This text was written by a singer for singers. It is my hope that gifted students will gain the musicianship and diction skills needed to successfully pursue vocal study.

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Week 1: English Transcription

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Day 2: IPA Chart

Day 3: Closed Front Vowels and Bright [a]

Day 4: Open Front Vowels

Day 5: Closed Back Vowels and Dark [ɑ]

Day 6: Open Back Vowels and Central [ʌ]

Grading Rubric

Breath

Breath Control	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Breath Expansion	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Breath Support	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100

Diction

Consonant Articulation	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Vowel Formation	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100

Lesson Preparation

70-----79/80-----89/90-----100

Musicianship

Expression	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Legato	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Pitch Accuracy	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Rhythmic Accuracy	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100

Posture and Tension

Postural Alignment	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Release of Tension	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100

Technique

Flexibility	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Onset	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Palatal Space	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Pharyngeal Space	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Projection	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Vibrato	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Tone Quality	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100
Vowel Equalization	70-----79/80-----89/90-----100

Daily Notes and Practice Times

Day 1 Practice Time: _____

Day 2 Practice Time: _____

Day 3 Practice Time: _____

Day 4 Practice Time: _____

Day 5 Practice Time: _____

Day 6 Practice Time: _____

The International Phonetic Alphabet

The IPA was established by the International Phonetic Association around 1888. Each symbol stands for one sound. Brackets enclose the symbols of a word or phrase. Precise pronunciation of each symbol must be defined within the respective language.

English, Italian, German, and French Transcription

The English transcription rules in this volume introduce IPA symbols that are shared with the English, Italian, German, and French languages. Specified diphthongs in American speech utilize the closed [e] and bright [a] symbols that are common to all four languages. IPA symbols with sample words are provided on the following chart. See pages 134-135 for the definitions of all symbols.

The long vowel mark [:] is not included in the following English transcription lessons since vowel length is implied within American English speech patterns. Vowel length indications are crucial for Italian and German transcription. A deliberate lengthening of the vowel is characteristic of both the spoken and lyric forms. French also maintains a deliberate lengthening of the vowel within the phrase but length is not typically indicated. Other IPA symbols include the primary stress mark ['] and secondary stress mark [,]. Stress marks precede the stressed syllable in the IPA. Stress is not indicated in French transcription since vowel length (the quality of the stressed syllable in French) is systematically implied within the pronunciation of the language.

Introduction to English Transcription

Silent vowels are not transcribed. A final *e* is often silent in English. For example, the four-letter word *love* [lʌv] is transcribed with three symbols to represent the three sounds that are actually pronounced. Single vowels may have more than one sound. The *i* of *like* [la:ɪk] is transcribed with the two IPA symbols that represent the sounds actually pronounced. Sometimes a vowel cluster makes one sound as in the word *tree* [tri]. Silent consonants are not transcribed. The *l* of *could* [kʊd] is silent. Double consonants are represented with a single symbol as in the word *call* [kɔl]. The schwa [ə] stands for an undefined sound in an unstressed syllable. Pronunciation must be defined for each language.

IPA	American English	Italian	German	French
[i]	see [si]	ivi ['ivi]	Lied [li:t]	ici [isi]
[ɪ]	wit [wɪt]		Bitte ['bɪttə]	
[e]	day [deɪ]	perché [per'ke]	Erde ['ʔe:rdə]	été [ete]
[ɛ]	bell [bɛl]	bene ['bene]	Feld [felt]	rêve [rɛvə]
[u]	blue [blu]	luna ['luna]	Ruhe ['ru:ə]	jour [ʒur]
[ʊ]	look [lʊk]		jung [jʊŋ]	
[o]	obey [ʔo'bei]	solo ['solo]	Mond [mo:nt]	pauvre [povrə]
[ɔ]	ought [ʔət]	core ['kɔre]	Sonne ['zɔnnə]	aurore [ɔrɔre]
[æ]	glad [glæd]			
[ɑ]	sigh [sai]	cara ['kara]	allein [ʔal'laen]	voilà [vwala]
[ɑ]	father ['fɑðə]		Abend ['ʔɑ:bənt]	âme [amə]
[ʌ]	dove [dʌv]			
[y]			Blüte ['bly:tə]	sûr [syʀ]
[ʏ]			Küsse ['kyssə]	
[ø]			schön [ʃø:n]	feu [fø]
[œ]			können ['kœnnən]	seul [sœl]
[ɜ]	bird [bɜd]			
[ɝ]			Vater ['fa:təʀ]	
[ʌ]	wheat [wɪt]			
[θ]	theme [θim]			
[ð]	them [ðem]			
[r]	thread [θrɛd]	parola [pa'rɔla]	rot [ro:t]	riche [riʃə]
[r]		rosa ['rɔza]	Herr [hɛʀʀ]	
[ɹ]	rose [rɔuz]			
[ʃ]	shine [ʃain]	lascia ['laʃʔa]	Sterne ['ʃtɛrnə]	chant [ʃɑ̃]
[ʒ]	azure ['æʒə]			jamais [ʒame]
[tʃ]	child [tʃaɪld]	cielo ['tʃɛlo]	Deutsch [dɔɐ̯tʃ]	
[dʒ]	just [dʒʌst]	gioia ['dʒɔja]		
[ŋ]		sogno ['soŋno]		vigne [viŋə]
[ʎ]		figlio ['fiʎlo]		
[ç]	huge [çjudʒ]		Licht [liçt]	
[j]	young [jʌŋ]	miei [mje:i]	Jahr [ja:r]	yeux [jø]
[y]				nuît [nyi]
[ɲ]	wing [wiŋ]	lungo ['luŋgo]	Engel ['ʔeŋəl]	
[x]			Nacht [naxt]	
[ʔ]	eyes [ʔaiz]		Augen ['ʔaogən]	

Closed Front Vowels and Bright [a]

IPA	English	Transcription	Rules
[i]	sea	[si]	e, ee, ea, ie, eo spellings
*[ei]	face	[feis]	a, ay, ey, ai, ei, ea spellings
*[ai]	sky	[skai]	i, ei, y spellings
[t]	liked	[laikt]	voiceless consonant + final d
[z]	fields	[fildz]	voiced consonant + final s

*American English diphthongs are transcribed with closed vowels and [a]

Provide IPA:

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|----------|--------|
| 1. likewise | keepsakes | speak | plains |
| 2. tweaked | wildlife | females | skyway |
| 3. vain | seams | daytime | kneels |
| 4. pleased | thyme | weave | maybe |
| 5. knights | quaint | smiled | tease |
| 6. maintains | leaped | namesake | signs |

Provide English Spelling:

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------|---------------|------------|
| 1. [sweɪd] | [naɪ'iv] | ['steɪl'meɪt] | [kwɪn] |
| 2. [lɪv] | [faɪnd] | [mɪk] | ['si,said] |
| 3. ['faɪnəɪt] | [pɪks] | [naɪn'tɪn] | [weɪvz] |

Answer Key:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. ['laɪkwaɪz] | ['kɪpsaɪks] | [spɪk] | [pleɪnz] |
| 2. [twɪkt] | ['waɪldlaɪf] | ['fɪmeɪlz] | ['skaɪ,weɪ] |
| 3. [veɪn] | [sɪmz] | ['deɪtaɪm] | [nɪlz] |
| 4. [plɪzd] | [taɪm] | [wɪv] | ['meɪbi] |
| 5. [naɪts] | [kweɪnt] | [smaɪld] | [tɪz] |
| 6. [maɪn'teɪnz] | [lɪpt] | ['neɪmsaɪk] | [saɪnz] |
-
- | | | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| 1. suede | naïve | stalemate | queen |
| 2. leave | feigned | mEEK | seaside |
| 3. finite | peaks | nineteen | waves |

Open Front Vowels

IPA	English	Transcription	Rules
[ɪ]	fit	[fɪt]	<i>i, ie, ui, y</i> spellings
[ɪ]	divine	[dɪ'vaɪn]	unstressed <i>i, e, and y</i> spellings
[ɛ]	bells	[bɛlz]	<i>e, ea, ie, ai</i> spellings
[æ]	mat	[mæt]	<i>a</i> spelling

Provide IPA:

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 1. satisfied | meditate | native | dispels |
| 2. mimicked | fantastic | splendid | lax |
| 3. pensive | displayed | lamplight | mystique |
| 4. napkin | sensitive | design | satin |
| 5. tempts | physique | myself | windmill |
| 6. bassinet | minimize | pastel | destined |

Provide English Spelling:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. [ˈmæʃtɪ,neɪ] | [pɪˈtɪt] | [ˈtek,steɪl] | [bæˈleɪ] |
| 2. [ˈnɛk,lain] | [ˈvælɪz] | [ˈlɪkwɪdz] | [dɪˈfensɪv] |
| 3. [ˈfɪnɪks] | [ˈwɪkɛndz] | [ˈvælɪd] | [ˈmɪdɪeɪt] |

Answer Key:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. [ˈsætɪsfaɪd] | [ˈmɛdɪteɪt] | [ˈneɪtɪv] | [dɪsˈpɛlz] |
| 2. [ˈmɪmɪkt] | [fænˈtæstɪk] | [ˈsplɛndɪd] | [læks] |
| 3. [ˈpɛnsɪv] | [dɪsˈpleɪd] | [ˈlæmplaɪt] | [mɪsˈtɪk] |
| 4. [ˈnæpkɪn] | [ˈsensɪtɪv] | [dɪˈzaɪn] | [ˈsætɪn] |
| 5. [tɛmpts] | [fɪˈzɪk] | [maɪˈself] | [ˈwɪndmɪl] |
| 6. [ˌbæsɪˈnet] | [ˈmɪnɪmaɪz] | [pæsˈtɛl] | [ˈdestɪnd] |
| 1. matinee | petite | textile | ballet |
| 2. neckline | valleys | liquids | defensive |
| 3. phoenix | weekends | valid | mediate |

Week 7: Reading Seconds, Italian Double Consonants and Back Vowels

Day 1: Introduction to Reading Music

Day 2: Italian [u] and Voiced Double Consonants with Seconds

Day 3: Italian *gli* Spelling with Seconds

Day 4: Italian [o] and [ɔ] with Seconds

Day 5: Accidentals with Seconds

Day 6: Italian Double Stops and Voiceless Double Consonants with Seconds

Introduction to Reading Music

There are four fundamental questions singers must ask themselves before attempting to read a line of music:

1. What is the key signature of the melody?
2. What degree of the scale does the melody begin on?
3. How many beats are in each measure?
4. What note value receives the beat?

The following lessons help singers answer these questions. A sample exercise is below. Follow this process when completing the daily work:

1. Fill in blanks (abbreviations: *M* = major, *m* = minor, *D* = degree)
2. Be reminded of the key signature by drawing a red line over the sharped or flatted lines and spaces in each octave (see arrows)
3. Play and sing a scale in the key of the example
4. Repeat the scale stopping on the first note of the phrase
5. Play the melody on the piano
6. Sing the melody on vowels with a raised palate and released jaw
7. Sing the full text with a raised palate and released jaw

Key: $B^b M$ First note: 1st D (1st degree of scale) Beats per measure: 4
(top number) Note value of the beat: Q (quarter note, bottom number)



IPA: [ed in -'spi - ri ed in -'spi - rj' aλλje- le-'menti]

Italian: ed inspiri ed inspiri agli elementi

Translation: and inspire and breathe into the elements

Excerpt: variation of *Vaga Luna* by Bellini

Italian Note: a composer may set two or more vowels on one note. Do not give equal time to the vowels. Even when assigned equal time, one vowel must have the feel of greater length. The long vowel will be preceded by a semiconsonant or followed by a long mark in the IPA.

Excerpts: musical examples in the following lessons were designed to introduce rhythms, intervals, and the sounds of the Italian, German, and French languages in a graded order. For this reason, the examples are newly composed or variations of excerpts from standard repertoire. Excerpts from standard repertoire are included whenever possible.

Week 10: Reading Fifths, German Ich-Laut, Ach-Laut, and Diphthongs

Day 1: Identifying Fifths

Day 2: German Ich-Laut, Ach-Laut, and [æ] with Ascending Fifths

Day 3: German Ich-Laut, Ach-Laut, and [æ] with Descending Fifths

Day 4: German Ich-Laut, Ach-Laut, and [ao] with Fifths

Day 5: German Ich-Laut, Ach-Laut, and [oø] with Fifths

Day 6: German Ich-Laut, Ach-Laut, and [oø] with Fifths

*Week 12: Reading Sixths,
French Mixed Vowels*

Day 1: French Mixed [y] and [ʏ]

Day 2: French Mixed [y] and [ʏ] with Sixths

Day 3: French Mixed [ø] and [œ]

Day 4: French Mixed [ø] and [œ] with Sixths

Day 5: French Schwa

Day 6: Musical Settings of the French Schwa

French Mixed [y] and [ʏ]

French mixed [y] is formed with an [i] tongue and [u] lip rounding. The semiconsonant [ʏ] is a rapidly articulated [y]. Form the vowels simultaneously to avoid a diphthong.

Sing the following examples on the same note and with the same rhythm. Elongate the last syllable of each phrase.

1. IPA: [syr la pœzi e syr la bote]
French: Sur la poésie et sur la beauté.
Translation: *over poetry and beauty.*
2. IPA: [lo myrmyre]
French: L'eau murmurer;
Translation: *the water murmur;*
3. IPA: [livɛr a s(e)se la lymjɛr ɛ tjɛd]
French: L'hiver a cessé, la lumière est tiède
Translation: *Winter has ceased, the light is warm*
4. IPA: [pistolez e sabr (e)gy]
French: Pistolets et sabre aigu. . .
Translation: *pistols and sharp sword . . .*
5. IPA: [l(e) nʏi dete]
French: Les nuits d'été
Translation: *The nights of summer*
6. IPA: [pur pase la nʏi oz etwal]
French: Pour passer la nuit aux étoiles.
Translation: *to pass the night beneath the stars.*
7. IPA: [kar l(e) nʏaʒ tard]
French: car les nuages tardent
Translation: *for the clouds hesitate*
8. IPA: [me vɛr fʏire duz e frɛl]
French: Mes vers fuiraient, doux et frêles,
Translation: *My verses would flee, sweet and frail,*

French Mixed [y] and [ɥ] with Sixths

1. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [u tr(e)s aj y na mi ɲə re ə]
 French: Où tressaille une âme ignorée,
 Translation: *where there shivers a soul ignored,*
 Excerpt: *Notre amour* by Fauré

2. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [u la nɥi e lə ʒur]
 French: Où la nuit et le jour
 Translation: *where night and day*
 Excerpt: *Tendrement* by Satie

3. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [dɔ dy ly stre ze ga jar]
 French: Dodus, lustrés et gaillards,
 Translation: *plump, glossy and robust,*
 Excerpt: *Villanelle des petits canards* by Chabrier

4. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [pʁə də vu py rze fi də lə i lza ku rɛ nɥi te ʒur]
 French: Près de vous, purs et fidèles, Ils accouraient, nuit et jour,
 Translation: *Near to you, pure and faithful, they would fly, night and day,*
 Excerpt: *Si mes vers avaient des ailes* by Reynaldo Hahn

French Mixed [ø] and [œ]

French closed mixed [ø] is formed with an [e] tongue arch, [o] lip rounding, and [ʊ] color. French open mixed [œ] is formed with an [ɛ] tongue arch, [ɔ] lip rounding, and [ʊ] color. Form the vowels simultaneously to avoid a diphthong. The schwa [ə] maintains an [œ] pronunciation.

Sing the following examples on the same note and with the same rhythm. Elongate the last syllable of each phrase. Elongate the penultimate syllable for phrases that end with a schwa.

- IPA: [e lɔʁskə no dø kœʁ]
 French: Et lorsque nos deux cœurs
 Translation: *And when our two hearts*
- IPA: [flœʁ tu dø]
 French: Fleurs tous deux!
 Translation: both of us are flowers!
- IPA: [e setə vwa misterjœzə]
 French: Et cette voix mystérieuse
 Translation: and this mysterious voice
- IPA: [(ø)rø ki mœʁ isi]
 French: Heureux qui meurt ici,
 Translation: Happy who dies here,
- IPA: [ynə tristɛs afrøzə]
 French: Une tristesse affreuse!
 Translation: a terrible sadness!
- IPA: [vwasi lœʁə ki pø tar(e)te]
 French: Voici l'heure: qui peut t'arrêter,
 Translation: It is time: what can be delaying you,
- IPA: [e lɛ bɛləz ekutøzə]
 French: Et les belles écouteuses,
 Translation: and the lovely listeners,
- IPA: [ʒə par adjø ma ʃɛʁ amə]
 French: Je pars! adieu, ma chère âme,
 Translation: I'm leaving! Good-bye, my dear love,

French Mixed [ø] and [œ] with Sixths

1. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [la my zi kə ʒwa jø zə]

French: La musique joyeuse,

Translation: *the joyous music,*Excerpt: *Tristesse* by Fauré

2. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [læ my zi kə fə lə]

French: leur musique folle;

Translation: *their mad music;*Excerpt: *Les cigales* by Chabrier

3. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [lo bə plœrə su le fœ je ə lə sjɛ lde zɛr]

French: L'aube pleure sous les feuillées, Le ciel désert

Translation: *The dawn weeps under the leaves, the empty sky*Excerpt: *Sonnet matinal* (Poème d'avril) by Massenet

4. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [a djø bo vwa ja ʒœr e las a djø]

French: Adieu, beau voyageur! Hélas! Adieu!

Translation: *farewell, handsome stranger! Alas!*Excerpt: *Les adieux de l'hôtesse arabe* by Bizet

French Schwa

The French schwa [ə] maintains an [œ] pronunciation. It is as equally unstressed as any other unstressed syllable. Sing the following phrases on one note giving equal time and weight to all syllables. Elongate the last syllable of the phrase without applying a weighted stress. Elongate the penultimate syllable for phrases that end with schwa.

1. IPA: [lær kurtə vɛstə də swa]
French: Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Translation: *Their short jackets of silk,*
2. IPA: [etwale də flœrɛtə palə]
French: Étoilés de fleurettes pâles.
Translation: *studded with pale little flowers.*
3. IPA: [mœr kœmə də la fymə]
French: Meurt comme de la fumée,
Translation: *dies like the smoke,*
4. IPA: [lær bɛlə fœjə dɔr]
French: leurs belles feuilles d'or!
Translation: *their beautiful leaves of gold!*
5. IPA: [ditə la ʒœnə bɛlə]
French: Dites, la jeune belle,
Translation: *Tell me, young beauty,*
6. IPA: [il rɛgɑnə lær dœmisilə]
French: Ils regagnent leur domicile,
Translation: *they return to their home,*
7. IPA: [lə li də fœjɛz ɛ pɛpɛrɛ]
French: Le lit de feuilles est préparé;
Translation: *The bed of leaves is prepared;*
8. IPA: [ʒœzə pœtitə fijɛ sɔrtɑ də lɛkɔlə]
French: Jasent, petites filles sortant de l'école,
Translation: *chatter, little girls leaving school,*

Musical Settings of the French Schwa

1. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [lɛ ʒœ nə də mwa zɛ lə]

French: Les jeunes demoiselles

Translation: *the young ladies*

Excerpt: *Tristesse* by Fauré

2. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [lə kœ rdɛ pə ti tə vwa]

French: Le chœur des petites voix.

Translation: *the choir of small voices.*

Excerpt: *C'est l'extase* (Ariettes Oubliées) by Debussy

3. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



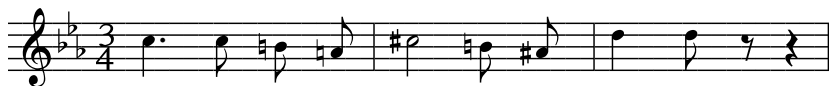
IPA: [sa bu ʃə də dœ rtu tə plɛ nə]

French: Sa bouche d'odeur toute pleine

Translation: *His mouth all full of perfume*

Excerpt: *Crois mon conseil, chère Climène* (Le promenoir des deux amants) by Debussy

4. Key:___ First note:___ Beats per measure:___ Note value of beat:___



IPA: [fœ jə kə lə gu frə re kla mə]

French: Feuille que le gouffre réclame,

Translation: *Leaf that the abyss reclaims,*

Excerpt: *Testament* by Duparc

A Glossary of Terms

Chiaroscuro. (Italian: bright/dark) Describes a desirable tone quality for singing that is both brilliant and rich.

Choir. A choir is a group of singers. The word is generally used to indicate such a group in a church. [Naxos]

Chorale. 1. A Lutheran hymn melody. 2. A hymn with 4-part harmonization.

Chord. The simultaneous sounding of two or more notes.

Chorus. 1. A part of a song which is repeated after each verse. 2. A large organized group of singers, especially one which performs with an orchestra or opera company. [Oxford]

Chromaticism. 1. Movement by half-steps. 2. A composition that uses pitches beyond a centralized key.

Classical. In the most general meaning of the word, classical music may designate fine music or serious music. More technically the word may refer to a period in the history of music, roughly from 1750 to 1830. [Naxos]

Clef. A symbol at the beginning of the staff that indicates which lines and spaces represent the particular notes.

Closed vowel. Refers to a vowel with an arched tongue thus reducing the space between the articulators.

Coda. A tail; a closing section to a movement.

Coloratura. Rapid, melismatic singing.

Concert master. The first violinist in an orchestra.

Concerto. A composition written for a soloist and orchestra.

Conductor. One who directs a group of musicians indicating the tempo, phrasing, dynamics, and style of the music being performed.

Consonance. Groups of tones that are pleasing when sounded in harmony.

Consonant. A basic speech sound in which the breath is at least partly obstructed and which can be combined with a vowel to form a syllable. [Oxford]

Continuant. A consonant which is sounded with the vocal tract only partly closed, allowing the breath to pass through and the sound to be prolonged (as with *f, l, m, n, r, s, v*). [Oxford]

Contralto. The lowest female singing voice.

Countertenor. A man with a singing voice that is higher than usual for a tenor and similar to a low female voice. [Cambridge]

Crescendo. A gradual increase in loudness in a piece of music. [Oxford]

Cricoid cartilage. The ring-shaped cartilage of the larynx. [Oxford]

Croon. To sing or hum in a soft, low, and soothing voice. [Webster]

Da capo. (Italian: to the head). To return to the beginning of a piece of music.

Deceptive cadence. A chord progression that does not lead to a resolution.

Decrescendo. A gradual decrease in loudness in a piece of music.

Dental. Involves the tip of the tongue and the back of the upper row of teeth: English [ð] and [θ], Italian and French [d], [n], [t], [l], [z], [s], [r], Italian [r], German [l], [z], and [s].

Development. The elaboration of musical themes, melodies, rhythms, or harmonies.

Dialect. A particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group. [Oxford]

Diaphragm. A dome-shaped muscular partition separating the thorax from the abdomen in mammals. It plays a major role in breathing, as its contraction increases the volume of the thorax and so inflates the lungs. [Oxford]

Diatonic. Of, relating to, or being a musical scale (such as major or minor scale) comprising intervals of five whole steps and two half steps. [Merriam-Webster]

Diction. The vocal expression of words. Good diction maintains clarity of the vowel, crisp consonant articulation, and correct pronunciation.

Diminuendo. Diminuendo (Italian: becoming less) is used as a direction to performers to play more softly. [Naxos]

Diphthong. A sound formed by the combination of two vowels in a single syllable, in which the sound begins as one vowel and moves towards another. [Oxford]

Dissonance. Discordant notes that fall outside of the harmony.

Drone. 1. A dull, monotonous tone. 2. A bass note or chord sounded under a melody.

Duet. A composition written for two vocalists or instrumentalists.

Dynamics. 1. The musical element of loudness or softness. 2. The symbols in music indicating volume.

Elegy. A musical lament for the dead.

Encore. (French: again) A song or piece performed after the final programmed recital selection in response to the audience's enthusiastic reaction to the performance.

Energico. To play or sing energetically.

Enharmic interval. Two notes that occupy the same position on the piano but differ in name. For example: C sharp and D flat.

Ensemble. A group of musicians.

Enunciate. To speak or sing phonetic sounds.

Epiglottis. A [leaf-shaped] flap of cartilage behind the root of the tongue, which is depressed during swallowing to cover the opening of the windpipe. [Oxford]

Espressivo. To play or sing expressively.

Etude. A musical composition written to improve technique.

Exercise. A sequence of notes used to train the singing voice.

Exhalation. To breathe out air. [Cambridge]

Exposition. The first section of a movement in which the theme or subject is introduced.

Expression. The conveying of feeling in a work of art or in the performance of a piece of music. [Oxford]

Expressionism. An early 20th century musical style that is abstract and Atonal in nature.

Fach. A voice type that corresponds with suitable roles.

Falsetto. A male vocal style that enables the singer to reach the pitch of a female through partial use of the vocal chords. [Hoch]

Fermata. The fermata (sometimes called a bird's eye) is a sign over a note indicating that it should be held longer than its written value.

Finale. The concluding movement of a composition.

Fioritura. (Italian: flowery). An indication within the music.

Flat. An accidental that lowers a pitch by a half-step.

Flexibility. The ability to move the voice with ease.

Focus. Describes a tone that is resonant and concentrated.

Forced. Describes a tone that is strained – this occurs when an excessive amount of air is pressed through the vocal apparatus.

Form. The structure of a musical composition.

Formant. A formant is the harmonic of a tone enhanced by resonance. For example, a room can be said to have formants, due to the way sound reflects off walls or other objects in such a way that specific frequencies are reinforced while others are absorbed.

Forte. A dynamic indication to play or sing loudly. Abbreviated: “f”.

Fricative. Produced by directing the air flow past a set of articulators: [ʌ], [v], [f], [ð], [θ], [z], [s], [ʒ], [ʃ], [ç], [χ], and [h].

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