Classical to Contemporary

The Evolution of Classically-Driven Vocal Pedagogy in a Contemporary Studio

by

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ABSTRACT

Among the most popular music genres are pop, rock, country, R&B, jazz, and blues. In the context of hit TV shows such as *Glee, The Voice*, and *The Masked Singer*, as well as the musical theater and pop industries booming, the American education system should be helping to prepare students for success in the current music industry. America's higher education systems have not followed the industry's trends as much as they could. Music schools with classical voice programs significantly outnumber musical theatre programs in the United States, and pop/contemporary commercial music programs are rare. The small number of contemporary commercial music programs (CCM) likely has to do with the lack of training that the faculties have had in these genres - they aren't qualified to teach them.

This paper specifically targets an audience of classically-trained singers and voice teachers. It will act as a guide on how to use classical training and classical vocal pedagogy to sing and teach Contemporary Commercial Music, CCM. There are ten chapters to this paper, discussing classical vocal pedagogy/vocal health and how those topics translate to CCM singing, proven and effective warmups for the CCM singer, and specific stylistic requirements with repertoire suggestions for all voice types and age groups in the styles of musical theatre, pop, jazz, contemporary Christian/gospel, and country.

The information in this paper is vital for the development of singers in today's industry. There are many famous pop singers with vocal injuries and, without proper vocal training, current singers are unable to find their authentic, healthy voices. Instead, many untrained pop singers modify their sound to imitate those they hear on the radio, which can lead to unhealthy vocal production. It is imperative that the systems training singers to sing classical, opera, and musical theatre include all CCM vocal teaching in their techniques. With this document, those who have been trained within the environment of classical music can use the same vocal health techniques and modify their approach to successfully teach and sing contemporary commercial music.

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GLOSSARY

Amplification: augmenting the volume and quality of singing though artificial, electronic means.[1]

Articulators: refers to the lips, teeth, tongue, mandible/jaw, and glottis. Other articulators include the alveolar ridge, hard palate, soft palate, uvula, and pharyngeal wall.[2]

Belt: most associated with the female chest-voice (TA-dominant, mode 1 register), where the tone is produced with speech-like quality (spread vowels, forward placement, occasionally a more nasal tone). This is also associated with chest-voice.

Breath control: the singer's ability to physically control how much breath is being utilized in the tone of their voice. Singers can adjust how much breath they let escape in the sound so their tone can be breathier, or clearer/with ping.

Breath support: the engagement from one's body, specifically muscles in their core and surrounding their lungs. Also referring to breath management and relationship between muscles of inhalation and exhalation.

Chest voice: TA-dominant, mode 1 register, most associated with male voices but also referring to lower pitches in one's range where supplemental vibrations can be felt in the chest. This register is also associated with most human speech.

Clear vocal tone: vocal tone free from extraneous sound; clean tone, pingy tone.

Fach: in classical singing, specifically operatic singing, one's specific voice type.[3]

Glottis: the space between the vocal folds.[4]

Head voice: CT-dominant, mode 2 register, preferred register for female voices in classical and can also be utilized in CCM music as a color shift.

Larynx: part of the body that houses the vocal folds, also referred to as the voice box.[5]

Melisma: portion of a vocal line where multiple notes are set to one syllable of the text.

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[1] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 11.
[2] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 15.
[3] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 63.
[4] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 73.
[5] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 98.

Mix: register between chest and head voice. One can approach this with a chest-dominant mix, where the percentage of chest voice/belt is higher than that of head voice, or with a head-dominant mix, where the percentage of head voice is higher than that of chest voice, depending on the style and range of the song.

Pharynx: the "throat area" portion of the vocal tract that connects the larynx to the mouth.[6]

Phonation: the sound produced while singing (or speaking). When the vocal folds approximate and vibrate, phonation occurs.

Range: the span of notes from top to bottom in one's voice or in a melody line of a song.

Register: a series of contiguous pitches produced in the same way and containing the same essential timbre. Two-registers, chest voice (TA-dominant/mode 1), head voice (CT-dominant/mode 2).[7]

Resonance: intensification and enriching of a musical tone through supplementary vibration. Achieved through a power source, a vibrator, and a resonator. Power source is breath, vibrator is vocal folds, and resonator is vocal tract.[8]

Singer's formant: a region of strong acoustic energy, as shown by a spectrogram. In scientific terms, a grouping or harmonics 3, 4, and 5 to create ring or singer's resonance.[9]

Soft palate: the soft portion of the roof of the mouth.

Straight-tone: singing tone with no vibrato.

Subglottic pressure: pressure below the glottis.

Tempo: speed of a piece of music.

Timbre: tone color or quality of one's voice.

Twang: timbre distinguished by brightness and nasality.[10]

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[6] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 136.
[7] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 149.
[8] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 150.
[9] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 163.
[10] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 182.

Vibrato: pitch fluctuation in singing that occurs in most trained voices and is used for expressive and stylistic purposes. It's a result of neurological impulses that occur when singers balance the power source with proper coordination of the vibrators and resonators.[11]

Vocal agility: the ability to move one's voice quickly between pitches while maintaining clarity of the individuality of all notes.

Vocal improvisation: making up a musical line that is not included in the written score or the recording of a piece of music.

Vocal pedagogy: study and science behind teaching voice.

Vocal tract: refers to the area of the human body where sound begins. Includes larynx and its resonators: pharynx, mouth, nasal cavity, and articulators.[12]

[11] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 187.
[12] Matthew Hoch, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 190.

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

Having not grown up in a musical family, pursuing an education in music was uncharted territory. Upon entering college as a music education major, my singing passions included choral music, musical theatre, country, and gospel, though my major was classically-based. I participated in the Gospel Choir at my institution, but it was not a part of the core curriculum. Singing only in the classical style was the general expectation of my voice teacher and the voice department as a whole. Not only was I unable to receive college credit for participation in a non-classical choir, but my voice teacher was also unaccepting of my desire to learn how to sing contemporary genres. It was because of these experiences that I dropped out of music for two years. Once I found my way back to music in an academic setting, it was my goal as a singer and teacher to inspire an environment and culture in music programs in higher education where students would be encouraged to sing in the styles they desire.

Vocal pedagogy, the study and science behind teaching singing, has been heavily geared towards classical singing for many generations. College and university programs across the United States have many voice professors who come from the background of classical music. Musical theater and contemporary commercial singing are subjects within vocal pedagogy that have only been explored in-depth over the past 20 years. However, since Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) is so predominant in today's musical culture, researchers have begun to explore these genres more in vocal pedagogy. In this literature review, I will examine the current research published in journal articles, dissertations, and books exploring contemporary commercial music.

Contemporary Commercial Music, or CCM, refers to any non-classical music such as pop, jazz, country, blues, folk, rock, and musical theater. The term CCM was coined in the year 2000 by one of the most well-known CCM researchers and pedagogues, Jeannette LoVetri,

creator of the "Somatic Voicework: The LoVetri Method."[13] There are many CCM singers who have never had vocal training, but there are almost no classical singers who have not had training. Vocal health is universal between all genres, but the technique between these broad genres differs. There is a great divide between classically trained teachers and contemporary vocal teachers because CCM singing lacks clear and cohesive pedagogy that addresses the specific style-related technique and vocal health needs of the CCM singer.[14] In this literature review, I will explore current research on vocal techniques between genres, current schools and programs offering CCM education at the college/university-level, belting/mixing, and CCM repertoire choices for students.

Vocal Technique

For many decades, singers often were taught that classically based voice techniques can translate to any genre. Mary Saunders Barton, author of the book *Bel Canto-Can Belto*, firmly believes that musical theater technique should stem from classical technique, so that one can find a better placement of their belt and mixed voices.[15] However, we are now learning that the functional requirements for contemporary singing are very different from the classical approach, and the requirements for musical theater compared to other CCM genres differ, as well.[16] Neal Woodruff quotes Jeannette LoVetri's *The Great Divide,* where she states,

> If classical vocal training is good for every kind of vocal sound, why don't opera singers get hired to sing in *Rent,* or *Hairspray* or *Suessical,* sounding like opera singers? Is

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[13] Jeannette LoVetri, "Contemporary Commercial Music", *Journal of Voice,* May 2008, 249, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2006.11.002.

[14] Irene Bartlett, and Marisa Lee Naismith, "An Investigation of Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) Voice Pedagogy: A Class of its Own?", *Journal of Singing*, Jan. 2020, 273, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/investigation-contemporary-commercial-music-ccm/docview/2339845199/se-2?accountid=4485.

[15] Gregory Berg, "Bel Canto-can Belto: Teaching Women to Sing Musical Theatre-Mary Saunders on Belting and the Mixed Middle Voice", *Journal of Singing,* Jan. 2011, 373, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/bel-canto-can-belto-teaching-women-sing-musical/docview/874155759/se-2?accountid=4485.

[16] Neal W. Woodruff, "Contemporary Commercial Voice Pedagogy Applied to the Choral Ensemble: An Interview with Jeannette LoVetri", *Choral Journal,* Dec. 2011, *39*, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/contemporary-commercial-voice-pedagogy-applied/docview/1010210596/se-2?accountid=4485.

everyone completely deaf? Don't they know the difference between the sounds of a classical singer and a pop/rock singer?[17]

LoVetri also states that all styles of CCM stem from the speaking voice and the singer is always amplified electronically, something that has not been usual in the classical field until recently and then, only in theatrical productions. She says two of the main distinctions between classical and CCM singing are vocal quality and production. Most CCM styles, including jazz, blues, rock, and country, arose from untrained singers, which is why society has only recently begun to include this style of singing in music education.[18][19] Although many CCM sub-genres were initiated by untrained musicians, there still has been some research in the past 30 years regarding what physically happens to produce a CCM-style sound.

A study conducted in 1999 by Jeannette LoVetri, S. Lesh, and Peak Woo analyzed the use of the vocal tract for producing different timbres for different styles. These distinctive vocal colors were concluded to be the result of movements within the vocal tract, rather than anatomical or physiological reasons. Some singers' larynxes rose and their pharynxes tightened; some singer's tongues lifted and their soft palates came down. All these modifications to the vocal tract produced a brighter, more contemporary [commercial] sound.[20] A substantial difference between musical theater tone production and classical production is how beauty of tone is defined and prioritized. In musical theater, acting and emotional choices are at least as important as tone quality, which help the actors convey the text and characters they are portraying. Tone quality in musical theatre should be speech-like; generally, the pronunciation of words should be as one would naturally speak them, and the typical lift of the soft palate as one produces in classical singing is not priority in speech-like singing (more information on this quality

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[17] Neal W. Woodruff, "Contemporary Commercial Voice Pedagogy Applied to the Choral Ensemble: An Interview with Jeannette LoVetri", 40.

[18] Neal W. Woodruff, "Contemporary Commercial Voice Pedagogy Applied to the Choral Ensemble: An Interview with Jeannette LoVetri", 45.

[19] Although LoVetri says this, it is important to keep in mind that music educators, especially those teaching beginning or younger students, have been using folksong in their curriculums.

[20] Jeannette LoVetri, "Contemporary Commercial Music: More than One Way to Use the Vocal Tract", *Journal of Singing,* Jan./Feb, 2002, 249, http://www.vocapedia.info/_Library/JOS_files_Vocapedia/JOS-058-3-2002-249.pdf.

in later chapters). Referring to CCM singing, LoVetri writes, “if there is no consistent singer’s formant, no smooth legato, no evenness of tone, no enhanced resonance, it really doesn’t matter.”[21] CCM singing requires distortion, color shifts, note “bends,” riffs/runs, and other forms of vocal expression dependent on the style and genre of the piece. The height of the larynx and the shape of the mouth must change for singers to produce different tone colors and style-attributes. Breathiness and nasality are encouraged in CCM singing, and color changes such as warmth, brightness, lightness, grit, growls, and screams, are crucial for CCM singers to sound authentic in performing the music. LoVetri states,

> Vocal tract shaping, including vocal fold behavior, subglottic pressure, and vowel quality, needs to be configured to conform to the demands of the music and the singer. Ideally, health should be the primary concern. However, musical or stylistic issues affected by the use of the instrument, such as pitch, range, or stamina problems, as well as issues of volume control, must also be considered… There is no one correct “place” to put the tone, nor a correct “resonance” to produce. The tone needs to be supported by the breath.[22]

In other words, while individual resonance may differ, breath support is a constant requirement.

Irene Bartlett and Marisa Lee Naismith agree with LoVetri; while breathing, phonation, articulation, and resonance are all required for both classical and CCM styles, the technical elements of each of these aspects are approached in different ways. While some voice production methods are discussed in the CCM field, those methods are mostly about style and sound rather than the technical pillars like breath support.[23]

Bartlett and Naismith have also found that CCM is speech-based and in tone color. The way to teach CCM would not be a “one size fits all” method and voice teachers will do their students a huge disservice if they approach CCM in that way. There are thoroughly defined

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[21] Jeannette LoVetri, “Contemporary Commercial Music: More than One Way to Use the Vocal Tract”, 250.
[22] Jeannette LoVetri, “Contemporary Commercial Music”, 251.
[23] Irene Bartlett, and Marisa Lee Naismith, “An Investigation of Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) Voice Pedagogy: A Class of its Own?”, 274.

characteristics for many CCM styles in Kim Chandler's chapter "Teaching Popular Music Styles" in the book *Teaching Singing in the 21st Century*[24]: R&B requires a relatively light vocal delivery with heavy use of embellishment, melisma, and fast vibrato; country needs a twangy vocal style delivered with a strong "Southern" accent; and jazz is characterized by conversational phrasing, speech quality, and timing.[25]

To produce sounds that are authentic to the genre, singers must still warm up their voices in a way that prepares them to reach those desired sounds. Vowel shapes are crucial in finding belt, mix, and other vocal tone colors in contemporary singing. Some vocal warmups that have been proven effective in the studios of teachers who teach musical theatre and belting are the warmup of singing the sound [njæ], sounding like a baby's cry, on a descending major triad, or a descending major scale from sol to do. Another warmup to find a belt or mix is "that's mine" on a descending 5-1 pattern.[26] Training and educating vocal teachers and singers in the use of these methods and pedagogy is most needed for today's CCM vocalists.

CCM Education

In 2003, there were only 31 schools of music that had one or more master's degrees in musical theater, and only 40 schools of theater with the same degree offered. Since then, mainstream media has included CCM increasingly in its productions; examples include the TV show *Glee* (2009-2015), the movie *Pitch Perfect* (2012), and popular movies turned into hit musicals such as *Frozen* (movie 2013, musical 2017), and *Mean Girls* (movie 2004, musical 2017). In response to these social and cultural shifts, schools of music and conservatories have started to add CCM majors and departments.[27] In 2012, there were 9,301 voice majors in music

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[24] Kim Chandler, "Teaching Popular Music Styles," Chap. in *Teaching Singing in the 21st Century*, ed. Scott D. Harrison and Jessica O'Bryan, 35-51, Springer, 2014, https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-94-017-8851-9.

[25] Irene Bartlett, and Marisa Lee Naismith, "An Investigation of Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) Voice Pedagogy: A Class of its Own?", 279.

[26] Christianne Roll, "The Female Broadway Belt Voice: The Singer's Perspective", *Journal of Singing,* Nov. 2019, 160, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/female-broadway-belt-voice-singers-perspective/docview/2316390701/se-2?accountid=4485.

[27] Edrie Means Weekly, and Jeannette L. LoVetri, "Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) Survey: Who's Teaching What in Nonclassical Music", *Journal of Voice,* June 2003, 207-208,

schools across the country, yet only 2,302 musical theater students, even though the hiring field post-graduation is more diverse than just opera companies and private classical voice teaching.[28] As the CCM industry is expanding and more opera companies are even adding musical theater shows to their seasons, colleges and universities are slowly beginning to change their programs to include popular music, including ASU's new Bachelor of Arts in Popular Music degree, which launched in 2020.

According to www.insidemusicschools.com, the following schools have the top popular music programs in the country: University of Southern California, Belmont University, Berklee College of Music, University of Miami, New York University, Catawba College, University of the Arts, Los Angeles College of Music, Middle Tennessee State University, Fullerton College, Columbia College Chicago, and The City College of New York.[29] The first CCM pedagogy program at a university was founded by Jeannette LoVetri at Shenandoah University (formerly Shenandoah Conservatory) in Winchester, Virginia in 2003.[30]

Just one year before the opening of Shenandoah Conservatory's CCM program, Edrie Means Weekly and LoVetri conducted a survey that examined the CCM experiences of teachers of singing from all around the world. This survey was distributed to the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), the British Voice Association (BVA), New York Singing Teachers' Association (NYSTA) and 139 surveys were completed. Most of the respondents were teachers at universities and private voice teachers. Seventy-five percent were members of NATS. Most were also well-versed in CCM performing themselves. Ninety-one percent taught musical theater, 17% taught cabaret, and 14% taught jazz. For those who taught CCM, 96% also taught classical

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http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/scholarly-journals/contemporary-commercial-music-ccm-survey-whos/docview/1410608/se-2?accountid=4485.

[28] David Meyer, and Matthew Edwards, "The Future of Collegiate Voice Pedagogy: SWOT Analysis of Current Practice and Implications for the Next Generation", *Journal of Singing,* Mar. 2014, 439, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/future-collegiate-voice-pedagogy-swot-analysis/docview/1511439621/se-2?accountid=4485. SWOT refers to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

[29] Mark Small, "Top Colleges for Popular Music", Aug. 2021, https://insidemusicschools.com/2021/08/20/top-colleges-for-popular-music/.

[30] Neal W. Woodruff, "Contemporary Commercial Voice Pedagogy Applied to the Choral Ensemble: An Interview with Jeannette LoVetri", 39.

singing to students. However, only 45% of teachers who teach musical theater had any training in CCM and they indicated they received their training through workshops, seminars, and their own research rather than at their undergraduate or graduate schools. Nineteen percent of people teaching CCM had no professional CCM experience or training related to this style.[31] The relative lack of voice teachers proficient in CCM styles back then has only improved slightly, but more research has been done on one specific CCM vocal style which pertains mostly to musical theater – belting.

Belting/Mixing

"Belt" has been incorporated in professional theater since the 1920s and has been used all over the world for much longer. Belting, and specifically, females using their chest voice, used to be a phenomenon that many trained classical vocalists and voice teachers thought was unhealthy and dangerous. Some people thought that any bright, brassy sound is chesty, or that anything spoken is automatically in chest register.[32] These theories are incorrect. With more research taking place regarding this voice type, we have a clearer understanding now that belting can be healthy and does not have to be harmful, if done properly.

Mary Saunders defines belt as the "apex of a spoken crescendo in a mixed speaking voice, beginning above a woman's primary passaggio and cannot occur in head voice."[33] Norman Spivey defines musical theater singing, or belt, as an extension of speech, alike not only in its mechanism of production, but also in its inner connection to the emotion and thought that motivate speech in daily life.[34] Scott McCoy studied belting with Robert Edwin[35], one of the most

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[31] Edrie Means Weekly, and Jeannette L. LoVetri, "Contemporary Commercial Music (CCM) Survey: Who's Teaching What in Nonclassical Music", 208-214.
[32] LoVetri, Jeannette, "Voice Pedagogy: Female Chest Voice", *Journal of Singing,* Nov. 2003, 162, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/voice-pedagogy-female-chest/docview/1402718/se-2?accountid=4485.
[33] Berg, Gregory, "Bel Canto-can Belto: Teaching Women to Sing Musical Theatre-Mary Saunders on Belting and the Mixed Middle Voice", 373.
[34] Spivey, Norman, "Music Theater Singing…Let's Talk. Part 1: On the Relationship of Speech and Singing", *Journal of Singing,* Mar. 2008, 483, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/music-theater-singing-lets-talk-part-1-on/docview/229034703/se-2?accountid=4485.
[35] See https://www.robertedwinstudio.com/.

successful teachers of belting in the world, and Edwin informed McCoy that belting does not need to be extremely loud or "shouted" because, unlike classical singers, CCM/belters' voices are amplified electronically, so there is little need to add extra vocal force and dynamics.[36] Corinne Ness established the following descriptions of belting in her research: "a thicker, thyro-arytenoid (TA) dominant fold, a shorter vocal tract due to a mid or high larynx and a narrowed pharyngeal space, and a divergent resonator shape, resembling a megaphone."[37] LoVetri states that more research is needed on many types of singers who use this quality [belt] in different musical styles.[38] She also says that belting is just a label given to a certain aspect of chest register function.[39]

In an interview of Jeannette LoVetri and Irene Bartlett in 2018, conducted by Melissa Forbes, Bartlett articulates how the industry has moved on from "belt" being the primary focus of CCM singing and pedagogy, and states that the new word is "mix." Mixing refers to the two main sets of muscles used to produce different tone placements (thyroarytenoid, TA, muscles for chest voice, and cricothyroid, CT, muscles for head voice) being balanced in usage, dependent on range, for a healthier and more accessible tone for CCM.[40] Vowel shapes are also key to whether a singer is belting or mixing, or which register is more dominant - head or chest. Naturally, with a more open vowel like /a/ and /æ /, a belted quality can be achieved. Mixing comes from phonating more closed vowels like /e/ and is usually used for higher pitches.[41] According to an anonymous professional singer in Christianne Roll's article, "The Female Broadway Belt Voice: The Singer's

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[36]Related in Scott McCoy, "A Classical Pedagogue Explores Belting", *Journal of Singing,* May 2007, 547, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/classical-pedagogue-explores-belting/docview/229037050/se-2?accountid=4485.

[37] Corinne Ness, "Teaching Music Theatre: An Integrative Dialectical Approach", *Opera Journal,* Mar. 2014, 4, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/scholarly-journals/teaching-music-theatre-integrative-dialectical/docview/1522787189/se-2?accountid=4485.

[38] Jeannette LoVetri, "Contemporary Commercial Music: More than One Way to Use the Vocal Tract", 250.

[39] Jeannette LoVetri, "Voice Pedagogy: Female Chest Voice", 162.

[40] Melissa Forbes, "A Tale of Two Pedagogues: A Cross-Continental Conversation on CCM", *Journal of Singing,* Nov. 2020, 583-584, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/soul-voice-conversation-with-trineice-robinson/docview/2462459742/se-2?accountid=4485.

[41] Christianne Roll, "The Female Broadway Belt Voice: The Singer's Perspective", 156.

Perspective," "mixing and belting are pretty synonymous. If it's in full chest, the audience is going to worry about the singer."[42] Many modern pedagogues say that all belting is mixing, but not all mixing is belting. More research, some utilizing technologies such as the laryngoscope, is needed on this topic.

CCM Repertoire

Hal Leonard, one of the largest music publishing companies in America, has a few books on its website relating to CCM singing. There are a couple of "vocal workout" and vocal technique books geared towards contemporary singers like *Vocal Workouts for the Contemporary Singer* from Berklee Press, *Contemporary Singing Techniques* from Vocal Method, and *The Contemporary Singer – 2nd Edition: Elements of Vocal Technique* from Berklee Guide. There are also some repertoire books consisting of genre-specific anthologies for musical theatre, country, jazz, etc. There has been a substantial increase in books relating to CCM singing in an academic setting such as, *So You Want to Sing Musical Theatre, So You Want to Sing Country,* and *So You Want to Sing Gospel*. These books, and more, are a part of a project of the National Association of Teachers of Singing called *So You Want to Sing: Guides for Performers.*[43]

Conclusion

The overarching finding in my review of current research in CCM singing is that more research must done so that voice teachers and singers of these contemporary styles have a clearer technical foundation to ensure vocal health. Colleges and universities are expanding their music programs year by year to include CCM styles, especially more musical theater degree options, and training for voice teachers is growing each year. Leading vocal associations have begun to endorse and feature CCM education and training in recent years: National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), the Voice Foundation, the American Academy of Teachers of Singing (AATS), the National Center for Voice and Speech (NCVS), and the New York Singing

[42] Quoted in Christianne Roll, "The Female Broadway Belt Voice: The Singer's Perspective", 157.
[43] "So You Want to Sing: Guides for Performers." National Association of Teachers of Singing, 2022. https://www.nats.org/So_You_Want_To_Sing_Book_Series.html.

Teachers Association (NYSTA).[44] For a voice teacher, being involved in one or more of these professional groups will provide access to resources like publications, presentations, lectures, and workshops necessary to be able to adjust your teaching styles for CCM singing.

Scott McCoy, a nationally renowned vocal pedagogue known for *Your Voice: The Basics* and *Your Voice: An Inside View* said in response to voice teachers asking him how to teach belting or CCM, "My general response to these questions has been a resounding 'I don't know! You'll have to speak with the experts and do further research on your own.'"[45]

[44] David Meyer, and Matthew Edwards, "The Future of Collegiate Voice Pedagogy: SWOT Analysis of Current Practice and Implications for the Next Generation.", *Journal of Singing,* Mar. 2014, 439, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/future-collegiate-voice-pedagogy-swot-analysis/docview/1511439621/se-2?accountid=4485.

[45] Scott McCoy, "A Classical Pedagogue Explores Belting", 545.

CHAPTER 2

CLASSICAL VOCAL PEDAGOGY

When teaching singing, most, if not all, voice teachers, choir directors, and beginning music teachers teach warmups and techniques that come from classical vocal pedagogy. These classical vocal health techniques are applicable when singing all styles of music. This chapter will explain the basics of breathing, phonation, and resonance as they relate to singing. These three aspects of vocal technique will be reviewed in later chapters as they relate to contemporary commercial music vocal production.

Breath is the power source for the voice.[46] Without a solid foundation of breathing, breath support and breath control cannot be attained for singing in any genre. When setting up the body for efficient breathing, one must have a balanced posture and relaxation in the muscles including, but not limited to, the abdominals, shoulders, chest, neck, facial muscles, and the entire torso. To take full breaths, the lungs must have space within the body to expand in all directions, like a balloon. To expand the lungs fully, the muscles surrounding the lungs must be released. These muscles include the diaphragm, external intercostals (for inspiration), internal intercostals (for expiration), external obliques, internal obliques, rectus abdominis, and transverse abdominals. The most important muscle of inhalation is the diaphragm, though we do not have direct control over this muscle. We do, however, have control over the surrounding muscles, as mentioned before. Efficiency in breath is the ultimate factor in vocal health and quality of sound.

Breath control and breath support are two aspects of breathing that can be confusing. Breath control is variable depending on the desired sound (more on this topic will be discussed in later chapters), while breath support must be consistent when singing all genres so that the power source of the voice is engaged.

A breath support exercise used by many professional singers, voice teachers, and voice therapists is breathing into a straw. This can be done two ways: with a straw placed in a small amount of water or by breathing through a straw on its own. The focus of straw breathing is to

[46] Scott McCoy, "Your Voice: The Basics", Columbus: Inside View Press, 2015.

channel the breath support in an effort to make the airflow consistent and concentrated. The straw encourages the singer to focus on a small exit space, the straw. When exhaling through a straw into a small cup of water, the goal is to create bubbles that explode at a consistent rate, over an extended period. Keeping a steady beat and increasing the number of counts one exhales into the cup is one way singers can better access and develop their breathing muscles. This same exercise can be done without a cup of water, while breathing in through the straw for a count of 1 to 4, and exhaling through the straw for 12 counts and, increasing by 4 until the singer is completely out of breath. Once the singing is about to run out of breath, they will also be able to feel their abdominal muscles engage and support the last bit of breath escaping from their body.

The anatomy of the voice is important for those who are teaching singing, and depending on the student's learning style, is helpful for student singers as well. This chapter won't go into as much detail on anatomy as other resources do but will cover the basics in order to help the reader understand anatomically how the singing voice is produced. After breathing, the next most important aspect of vocal production is phonation. Phonation is the rapid, periodic opening and closing of the glottis through separation and apposition of the vocal folds that, accompanied by breath under lung pressure, constitutes a source of vocal sound.[47] The four actions of phonation are:

1. The vocal folds draw together to close the glottis
2. The vocal folds draw apart for respiration
3. The vocal folds lengthen and become much thinner for higher pitches
4. The vocal folds shorten and thicken for lower pitches

There are many muscles surrounding the glottis that assist in vocal fold closure and the stretching and contracting of the vocal folds to produce different pitches. Two of the dominant muscles are the cricothyroid (CT) and the thyroarytenoid (TA). Later in this study, I will discuss the two modes that many voice pedagogues have been using as a basis for the discussion of

[47] "Phonation Definition & Meaning." Dictionary.com. Dictionary.com. Accessed June 21, 2022. https://www.dictionary.com/browse/phonation.

vocal registers. Those two modes are Mode 1, chest voice dominant/TA-dominant and Mode 2, head voice dominant/CT-dominant. Most classical pieces are Mode 2, and Mode 1 is utilized frequently for all CCM repertoire and almost exclusively basses and tenors.

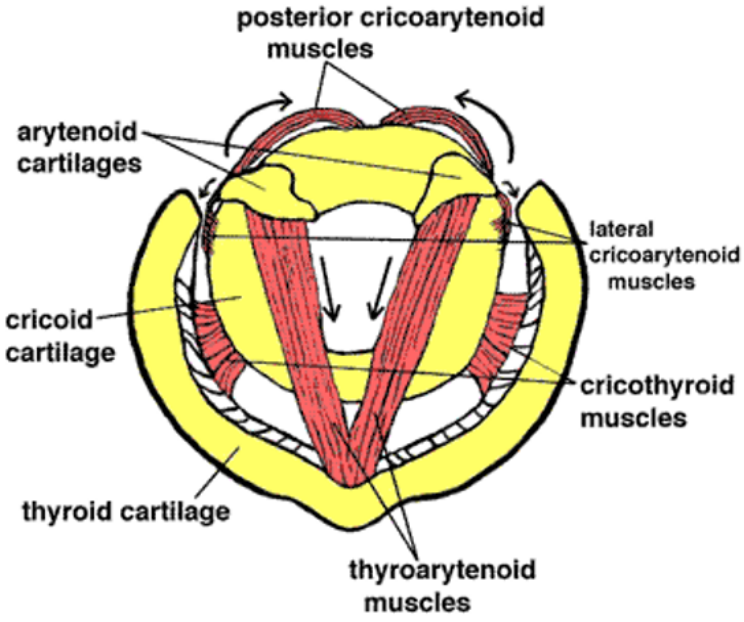

Figure 1. "View from above Larynx, including cricothyroid and thyroarytenoid muscles," *Anatomy | Medical School - University of Minnesota*, Accessed October 14, 2022.

The vocal folds are the vibrators for the human voice. Without resonance, the folds produce a simple buzz. We need elements of the vocal tract to produce articulation and create resonance. Vocal resonance is defined as the quality of being deep, full, and reverberating.[48] It's also defined as the amplification and enhancement of vocal sound.[49] There are two kinds of resonance: public and private resonance. Public resonance is shared with the listeners. This resonance is heard externally, as opposed to private resonance, which is felt internally. No one

[48] Anette Grant, "The 4 Most Important Elements of Your Voice." *Fast Company*, June 12, 2015. https://www.fastcompany.com/3047183/the-4-most-important-elements-of-your-voice.
[49] Scott McCoy, "Your Voice: The Basics", Columbus: Inside View Press, 2015.

can hear or feel this private resonance except the singer. Some singers can feel supplemental vibrations in their chest and their facial muscles. Which is private resonance.

Returning to the straw breathing exercises as mentioned above, straw phonation/resonance is also helpful for encouraging singers to find full glottal closure and clarity in tone. This is a warmup associated with Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract (SOVT) exercises, which encourages sound to be produced through a partially closed mouth, thus creating back pressure in the vocal tract to help the vocal folds vibrate with more ease.[50] This can be done by breathing in through a straw, then phonating through the straw so that the straw buzzes and the sound is coming from the straw. Like straw breathing, the singer should inhale through the straw and then phonate on a pitch that is around their natural speech. A good way to find the most optimal pitch for beginning straw phonation is to speak the ABCs and determine the general pitch of your voice on the piano. That pitch will be your optimal speech pitch and solfeggio "do" for the exercise. "Do, re, do" is a good straw phonation pattern – not exceeding pitches that are no longer buzzy in the straw. Slides from "do" to "sol" then back to "do" are also helpful for those singers who have mastered "do, re, do".

Breathing, phonation, and resonance are all aspects of classical vocal pedagogy that are required, yet modified, when singing and teaching CCM singing. Breath support must be consistent throughout all genres, but breath control can and should fluctuate depending on the genre and desired tone color for CCM. A singer should be able to produce a clear tone through clean vocal fold closure, but also learn how to modify their tone color for different genres of music.

[50] L. Irene & D. Harris, "Straw Phonation", *VoiceScienceWorks*. Retrieved June 21, 2022, from https://www.voicescienceworks.org/straw-phonation.html.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEMPORARY WARMUPS

Warming up the breath, articulators, body, and voice are important before singing any genre of music. Singers must treat their instruments - their bodies - with respect and take care of all the muscles associated with singing before attempting to sing full-out in classical or CCM styles. I have always correlated the importance of vocal warmups with the importance of physical warmups at the gym – you will most likely get hurt if you go straight into the gym and attempt to squat 200+ pounds on the rack. Singing should be approached with similar care. Finding breath and support, as well as resonance and relaxation of the instrument are the main aspects of warming up.

To warm up your breath, an effective warmup is lip trills (or lip buzzes, raspberries, “bubbles”, tongue trills). For CCM and classical singing, the following lip trill warmups are excellent for breath movement, as well as getting the articulators in action. For higher-voiced singers, begin in the key of D and stretch out over two full octaves. For lower-voiced singers, begin in the key of B and stretch out over two full octaves.

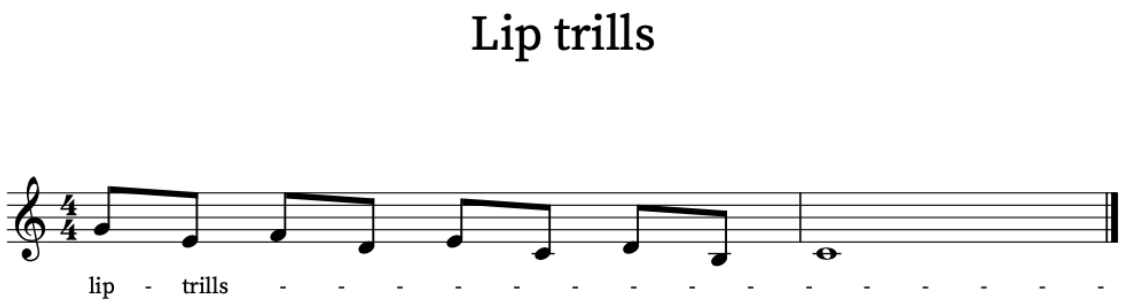

Figure 2. Lip trills 5-3-4-2-3-1-2-7-1, “sol-mi-fa-re-mi-do-re-ti-do”

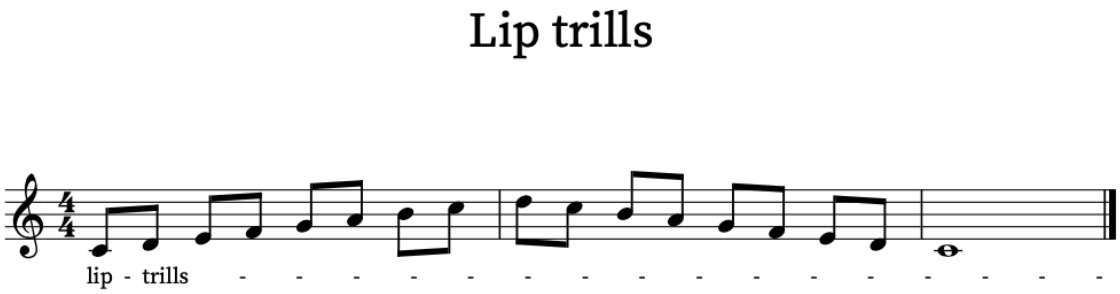

Figure 3. Lip trills 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1, “do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-ti-do”

Finding a clear tone in classical and operatic singing is, arguably, the most important factor. I will argue that it is important in CCM singing, as well, though it is not the most important factor in these styles. One may not need pure and clear tone on all pitches when singing CCM styles (more info on this in Chapter 3), but warming up and accessing tone clarity are essential in all genres. Phonation occurs when the vocal folds are drawn together, and resonance is the amplification of that sound. In warmups, it is necessary for all singers to practice phonation with clean fold closure before adding other effects to their tone. If all a singer can produce is a breathy sound, this could be an indication of unhealthy pathology or technique. The following warmups, along with the resonance warmups listed in Chapter 2, are helpful for accessing purity in tone so that the vocal folds come to full closure when desired.

These two warmups are inspired by Amanda DeMaris at Arizona State University:

> [a] vowel with hand covering the mouth, allowing a slight bit of air to escape from the mouth. Feel the buzzing or vibrations on your hand, allowing the sound to be aimed strictly towards the hand.
>
> [u] vowel with one finger gently placed inside of the mouth, allowing a slight bit of air to escape through the corners of the mouth. Again, searching for forward, resonant sound that creates supplemental vibrations on your finger.

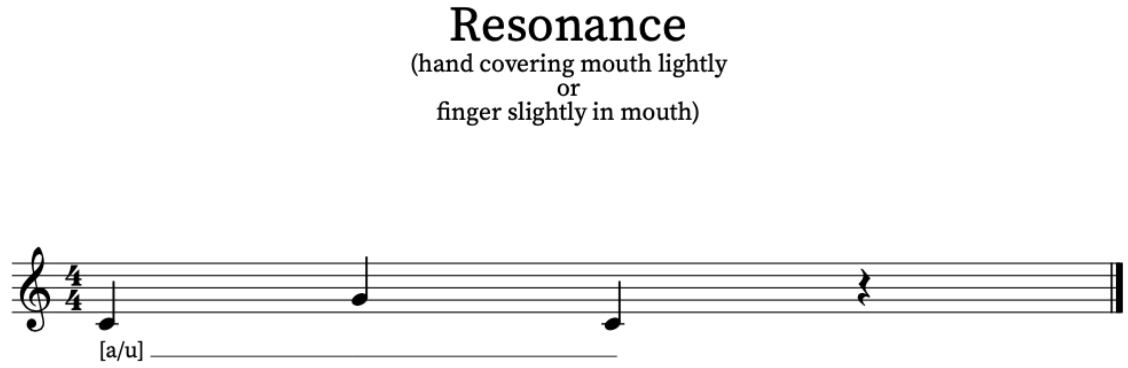

Figure 4. Resonance Exercise, slide

Christina Kang, Speech Language Pathologist, inspired these next two warmups:

Resonance (lip trill, hum, [a]) 5-5-5-3-1, “sol-sol-sol-mi-do”: The focus of this warmup is to have the lip trill, hum, and [a] vowel all placed in the same forward resonant spot so there are no breaks or cracks when changing between the three sounds. Begin this in a comfortable, lower range: treble singers should start around the key of A, beginning on E4, and bass/baritone singers should start around the key of B, beginning on F#3.

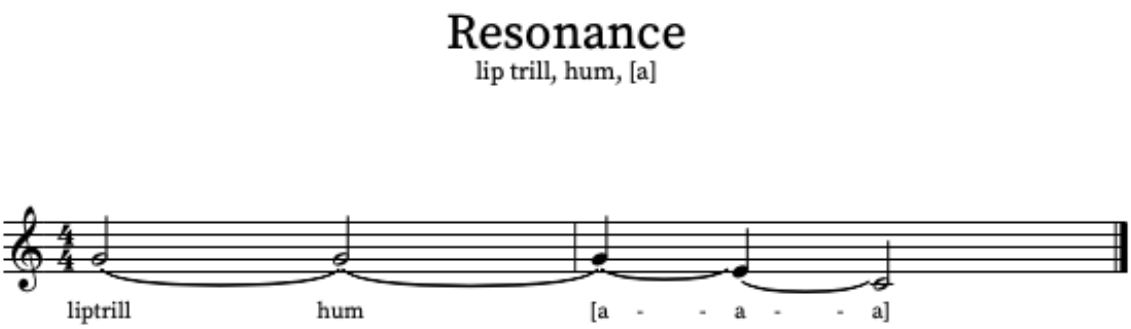

Figure 5. Resonance Exercise, lip trill to hum

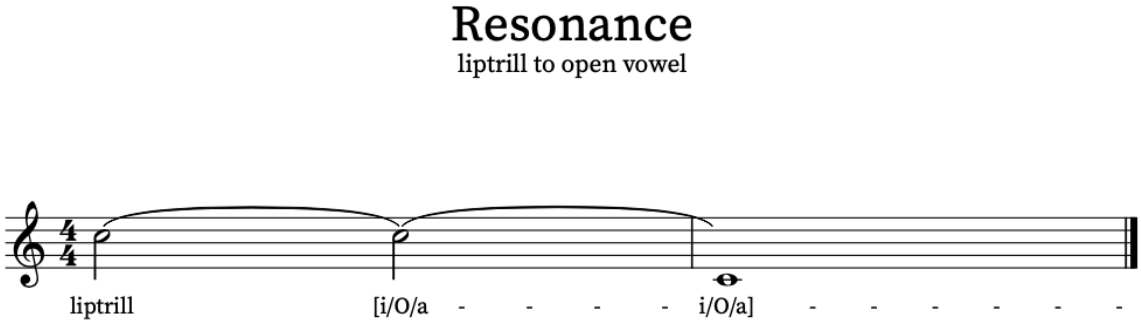

Figure 6. Resonance (lip trill to open vowel) 8-8-1, “sol-sol-do” ([i], [O], or [a])

These next few warmups are mixing warmups. The goal of these is spreading the vowels, so that a speech-like quality is achieved in the voice. It is important that the singer still aim for forward resonance and a clear tone. “Singing” these is not the goal, rather “speaking on pitch” is the objective. Try speaking the following words in a more nasal tone, in an approximate pitch of a B4 or C5 for female-identifying voices, and D5 or E5 for male voices (whichever approximate pitch you choose, it should be slightly higher than your normal speaking voice). Once you’ve found a bright, somewhat nasal sound, you may continue with the following mixing warmups, moving up in pitch by half steps, beginning in or around the key of A for treble voices and B for bass voices:

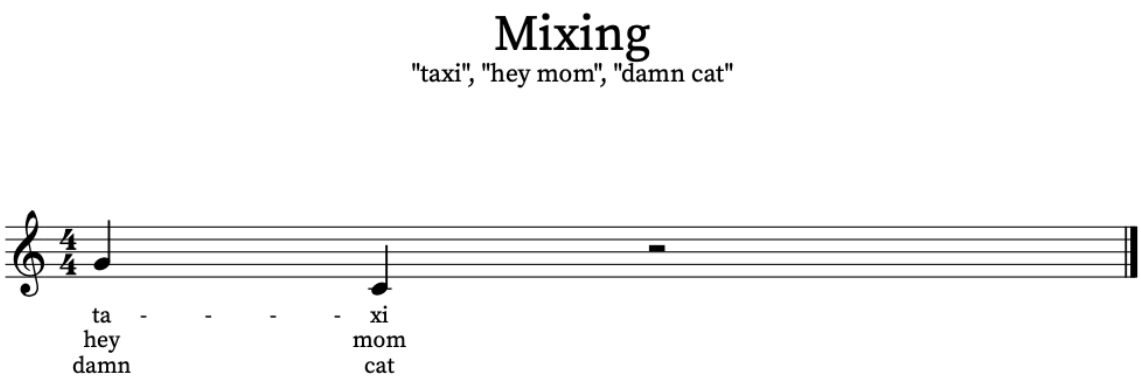

Figure 7. Taxi 5-1, “sol-do”
Hey mom 5-1, “sol-do”
Damn Cat 5-1, “sol-do”

The next two warmups are for developing and stretching your belt, or chest voice. These are wonderful musical theatre warmups, but also relate to chest voice and belting in other CCM genres. Make sure you are focusing on your vowel shape and lower chest resonance for these –

the vowel shape should be rounder and taller than the mixed warmups so that you stay more in your chest-dominant voice.

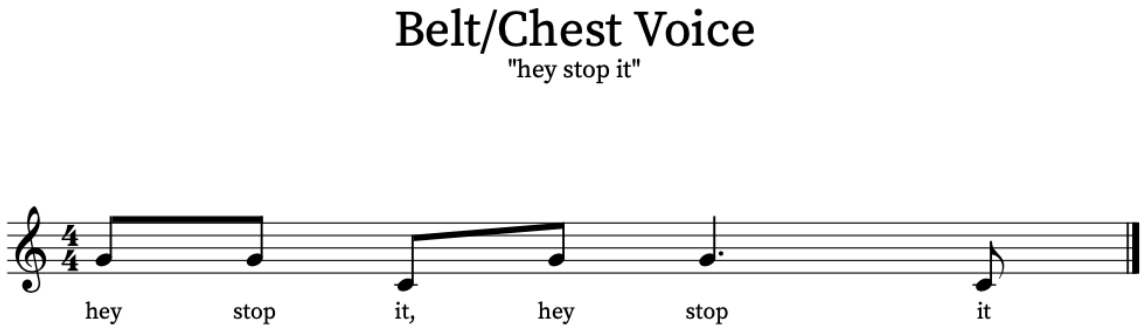

Figure 8. Hey stop it, hey stop it 5-5-1-5—1, “sol-sol-do-sol-sol—do”

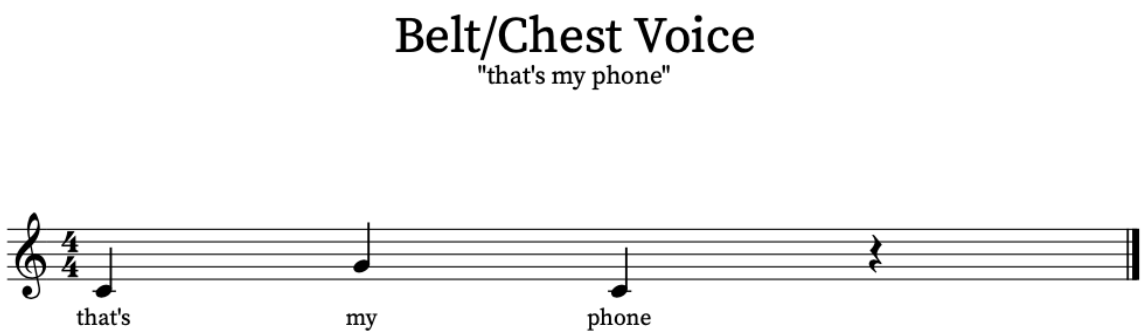

Figure 9. That’s my phone 1-5-1, “do-sol-do”

It is important to also be able to switch between a chest-dominant timbre and a head-dominant timbre when singing CCM repertoire. This dramatic and somewhat drastic tonal shift is not something that is encouraged in classical and operatic singing, so this next warmup is important for those who have more strictly been singing classical repertoire:

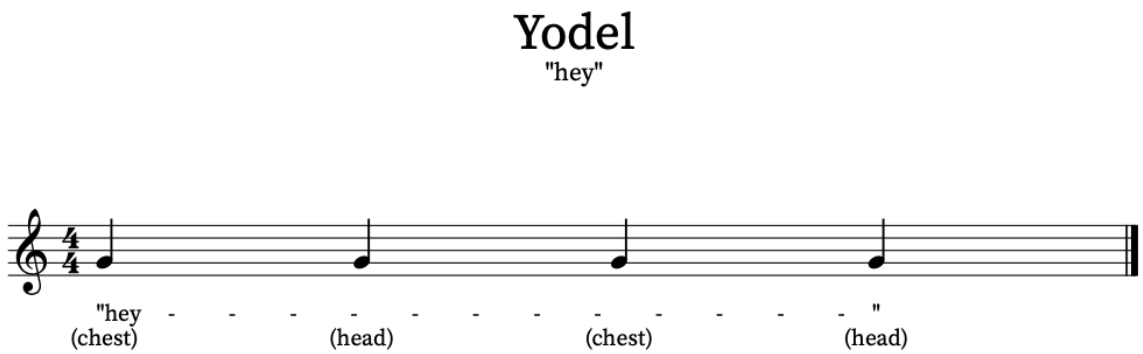

Figure 10. Hey (yodel on one pitch)

As we are beginning to access our CCM voices, it is important to develop agility and improvisational skills. If you are a classically trained singer, you might have heard the term melisma, referring to singing multiple notes over one syllable in a classical piece. This term is similar to the terms “riff” and “run,” under the umbrella of the term “agility,” that I will use in this paper. The most significant difference between a classical melisma and a CCM riff is how pristine, disconnected, or individualized the notes are in CCM agility. Melismas are more connected while riffs and runs are more articulated. The following four warmups are geared to encourage faster mobility in the voice, as well as give opportunities for improvisation.

Improvisation:

Hey (with a twist) 5-4-3-2-1, “sol-fa-mi-re-do”: the basic outline of this exercise is written below. The focus of this warmup is to encourage improvisation on a simple five-note scale. The singer should take liberties with tempo, embellishments i.e. trills, added notes, and rhythms. A favorite improvisation technique of mine is to add triplet rhythms to each pitch, starting on the centered pitch and going up a step then back down to the main pitch again, like “sol-la-sol-fa-sol-fa-mi-fa-mi-re-mi-re-do” on 8th note triplets. In baroque music, this pattern would be considered a variation of a turn.

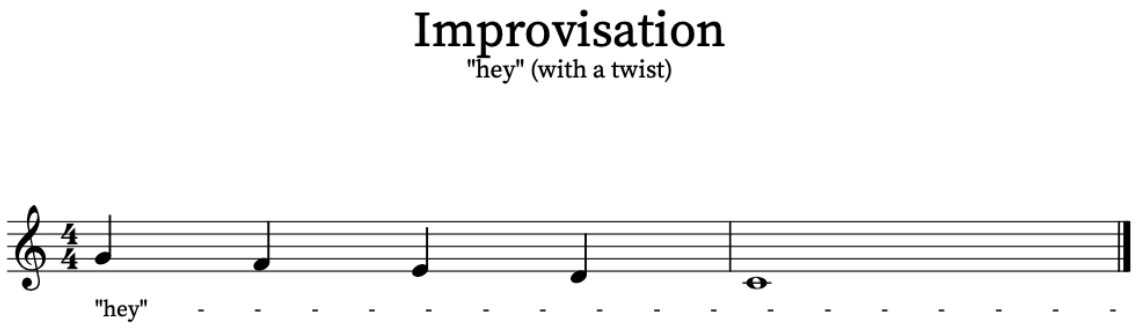

Figure 11. Improvisation exercise “hey”

Agility:

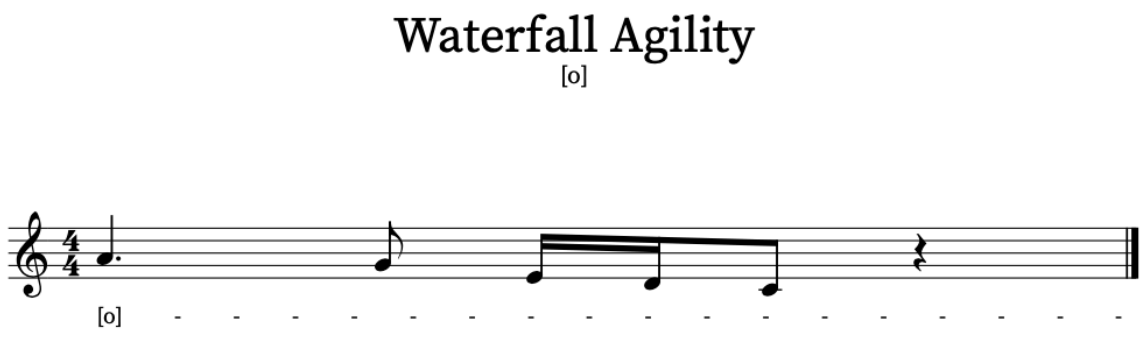

Figure 12. Ooh (waterfall) 6-5-3-2-1, “la-sol-mi-re-do”

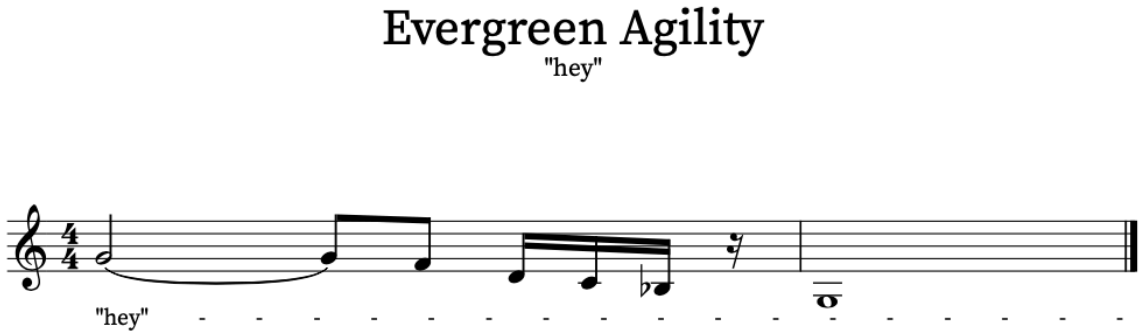

Figure 13. Ay (Evergreen riff) 8-m7-5-4-m3-1, “do-te-sol-la-me-do”

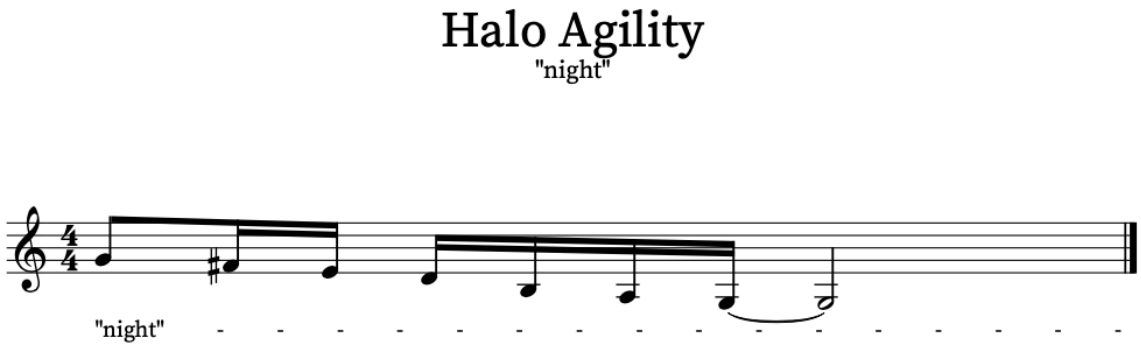

Figure 14. Night (Halo riff) 8-7-6-5-3-2-1, “do-ti-la-sol-mi-re-do”

CHAPTER 4

REPERTOIRE SELECTIONS

When choosing CCM repertoire for yourself or your students, it is imperative to take into consideration five important factors: range, register, tempo, agility, and improvisation. It is also important to note the topic of the song and whether that topic will translate to the age and personal preferences of the singer. Choosing CCM repertoire relates to choosing classical repertoire in that there are specific Fachs (voice types) for classical repertoire, which are defined by a combination of vocal agility, tone color, and tessitura. Vocal agility refers to how quickly a singer can move their voice between multiple pitches, usually on one syllable. Other terms that people use for this vocal stylization are riffs and runs. CCM music includes many songs where the singer should include vocal riffs and runs, relating to classical melismas, as these are a natural part of the performance of such genres. The final important factor when choosing repertoire is vocal improvisation, which will be discussed in more detail in the repertoire analysis chapter.

Vocal improvisation is making up a musical line that is not included in the written score or the recording of a piece of music. A few examples of types of vocal improvisation are adding pentatonic scales (ascending or descending), yodels (when you break your voice between chest register and head register so there is a dramatic tone color shift between a lower note and higher note), slurring pitches together, changing the rhythm of the melody, and quoting another tune in the middle of a song (used for many jazz songs) There aren't as many boundaries for which types of singers can sing CCM repertoire as there are in many classical repertoire selections, and it is crucial for CCM singers to break through those boundaries and explore their vocal agility and improvisation skills.

Below, you will find tables for musical theatre, pop, jazz, contemporary Christian/gospel, and country repertoire. These figures will include song titles and composers; the range of the original key; which register is applicable (mode 1 – chest-dominant, mode 2 – head-dominant, or both); a general tempo description; agility ranked from 1-5, where 1 requires little agility and 5, which indicates that the singer must be extremely vocally agile; and improvisation also ranked

from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning the singer should stick to the melody and 5 meaning the singer must be capable of creating their own musical melodic lines. These figures will feature song selections, arranged by suggested age range of the singer. The songs in bold type will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters on specific genres. I also go in to more detail about my 1 to 5 classifications in agility and improvisation. Note: The musical theatre selections also include intended voice type, soprano/alto (SA), or tenor/baritone/bass (TBB) as these come from musicals where casting is mostly gendered.

Table 1. Musical Theatre Repertoire

Title	Composer	Voice Type	Range	Register	Tempo	Agility	Improvisation
I Don't Want to Live on the Moon	Moss	**all**	A3-C5	mode 2	ballad	1	1
I Could Have Danced All Night	Lerner	SA	B3-F5	mode 2	uptempo	2	**1**
My New Philosophy	Lippa	SA	B3-D5	mode 1	uptempo	1	1
On The Street Where You Live	Lerner	TBB	B♭3-Eb5	mode 1	ballad	1	1
Grow For Me	Menken	TBB	B♭3-E5	mode 1	uptempo	1	1
What Do I Need with Love	Tesori	TBB	D4-G5	mode 1	uptempo	**2**	1
Try Me	Bock	TBB	B♭3-E5	mode 1	uptempo	1	1
Waiting For Life	Flaherty	SA	B3-D5	mode 1	uptempo	2	2
If I Were a Bell	Loesser	SA	C4-E5	both	uptempo	2	2
When the Music Played	Levine	SA	F#3-D5	both	ballad	2	**2**
If I Sing	Shire	TBB	A3-E6	mode 1	ballad	**1**	1
The World Goes 'Round	Kander	SA	A#3-F5	mode 1	ballad	2	2
Favorite Places	Gwon	TBB	B3-F#5	both	ballad	2	2
Christmas Lullaby	Brown	SA	A3-E5	both	ballad	2	2
Burn	Miranda	SA	A3-D5	both	ballad	**3**	2
Michael in the Bathroom	Iconis	TBB	A3-G5	mode 1	uptempo	4	**3**
To My Angels	Lane	SA	D4-F5	both	ballad	5	**5**
Run Away with Me	Kerrigan	all	C4-A♭5	mode 1	ballad	4	**4**
Heart of Stone	Marlow	SA	E3-D5	both	ballad	**4**	5
The Mad Hatter	Wildhorn	SA	B♭3-F5	mode 1	uptempo	**5**	3

Table 2. Pop Repertoire

Title	Composer	Range	Register	Tempo	Agility	Improvisation
This Is Me	Watts	G3-E5	mode 1	uptempo	3	3
Nobody's Perfect	Gerrard	G3-E5	mode 1	uptempo	1	2
Bright	Sierota	G♭3-G♭5	both	uptempo	1	**1**
All of Me	Stephens	C4-B♭5	both	ballad	5	**4**
I'd Do Anything for Love	Steinman	A3-B5	both	ballad	1	1
Yellow Submarine	Lennon	E4-E5	mode 1	uptempo	**1**	1
Drops of Jupiter	Monahan	G4-C6	both	ballad	**2**	3
Kiss From a Rose	Samuel	D4-C6	both	ballad	2	**2**
Water Under the Bridge	Atkins	B♭3-B♭4	mode 1	uptempo	3	**3**
Thinking Out Loud	Sheeran	B3-A5	both	ballad	**3**	2
Titanium	Sia	G3-E♭5	both	uptempo	2	3
Brave	Bareilles	F3-E♭5	both	uptempo	3	2
Dancing On My Own	Carlsson	D♭4-B♭5	both	ballad	3	2
Goodbye Yellow Brick Road	John	D3-E♭5	both	ballad	**4**	2
If I Ain't Got You	Keys	D3-D5	both	ballad	4	4
Bright Skies	Waddington	Key of A♭	both	ballad	4	4
Alone	Steinberg	D4-G5	mode 1	uptempo	2	2
Hero	Carey	G#3-E5	both	ballad	**5**	4
Almost is Never Enough	Grande	F#3-A5	both	ballad	5	**5**
Misery Business	Williams	F3-E♭5	mode 1	uptempo	2	2

Table 3. Jazz Repertoire

Title	Composer	Range	Register	Tempo	Agility	Improvisation
Blue Skies	Berlin	B♭3-D5	both	uptempo	1	**3**
Someone to Watch Over Me	Gershwin	E♭4-F5	mode 1	ballad	1	1
Orange Colored Sky	DeLugg	C4-E♭5	both	uptempo	**3**	2
New York, New York	Kander	C4-G♭5	mode 1	uptempo	**1**	2
Black Coffee	Webster	G3-C5	mode 1	ballad	2	3
My Funny Valentine	Rodgers	G3-B♭4	mode 1	ballad	1	**4**
God Bless the Child	Holiday	B♭3-E♭5	mode 1	ballad	1	4
Cheek to Cheek	Berlin	E3-C5	both	uptempo	**2**	3
Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy	Raye	C4-D5	Both	uptempo	**4**	1
I've Got You Under My Skin	Porter	B♭3-F5	mode 1	uptempo	2	3
Route 66	Troup	C4-E♭5	mode 1	uptempo	1	1
You've Changed	Fischer	C4-D5	both	ballad	4	2
Don't Get Around Much Anymore	Ellington	C4-E5	both	uptempo	3	2
Fly Me to the Moon	Howard	G3-G5	mode 1	uptempo	2	**2**
I Got It Bad and That Ain't Good	Ellington	E♭3-B♭4	mode 1	ballad	3	4
My Way	François	G3-F#5	mode 1	ballad	2	1
The Lady is a Tramp	Rodgers	E3-A5	mode 1	uptempo	1	2
At Last	Gordon	G3-C5	mode 1	ballad	**5**	3
Misty	Garner	D3-C#5	mode 1	ballad	5	**5**
Summertime	Gershwin	G3-G5	mode 2	ballad	1	**1**

Table 4. Contemporary Christian/Gospel Repertoire

Title	Composer	Range	Register	Tempo	Agility	Improvisation
What A Friend We Have in Jesus	Converse	C4-D5	both	ballad	1	1
Because He Lives	Maher	Key of G	mode 1	uptempo	**1**	1
I Can Only Imagine	Millard	B3-G#5	mode 1	ballad	1	**1**
Reckless Love	Asbury	Key of G	mode 1	uptempo	2	**2**
Amazing Grace	JNewton	A3-F#5	mode 1	ballad	3	**5**
Goodness of God	Johnson	A♭3-E♭5	mode 1	ballad	2	3
Believe For It	Winans	A3-C5	mode 1	ballad	2	3
Up To the Mountain	Griffin	G3-E5	mode 1	ballad	1	2
New Name Written Down In Glory	Gayle	Key of D	mode 1	uptempo	2	2
Precious Lord, Take My Hand	Dorsey	G#3-C#5	mode 1	ballad	**3**	4
Happy	Cobbs	G3-C5	both	uptempo	5	5
Lion and the Lamb	Brown	Key of G	mode 1	uptempo	1	2
Every Praise	Walker	A♭3-B♭4	mode 1	uptempo	2	**3**
For Your Glory	Booker	A♭3-E♭5	mode 1	ballad	**4**	4
His Eye is On the Sparrow	Gabriel	C4-E5	mode 1	ballad	**5**	5
Speak The Name	Hawthorne	E♭3-D♭5	mode 1	ballad	3	3
God is Good	McRenolds	F4-G5	mode 1	ballad	2	2
Above All	LeBlanc	B3-E5	both	ballad	**2**	3
Never Alone	Franklin	F#3-E5	both	uptempo	4	**4**
Lord, You Are My Song	Sherman	D3-B4	both	ballad	3	2

Table 5. Country Repertoire

Title	Composer	Range	Register	Tempo	Agility	Improvisation
I Hope You Dance	Sanders	C4-F5	mode 1	ballad	1	2
Who I Am	Verges	Key of G	mode 1	ballad	2	2
Raining on Sunday	Brown	F#3-F#5	mode 1	ballad	3	4
How Do You Like Me Now	Keith	A3-G5	mode 1	uptempo	**1**	1
It's A Great Day to Be Alive	Scott	D4-G5	mode 1	ballad	1	2
Suds in the Bucket	Montana	F3-B♭4	mode 1	uptempo	2	1
Leave the Pieces	Austin	G3-D5	mode 1	ballad	1	1
My Wish	Robson	E4-B5	mode 1	ballad	3	**5**
Strawberry Wine	Berg	A3-D5	mode 1	ballad	**2**	3
What About Now	Smith		mode 1	uptempo	2	**1**
Bye, Bye	Bourke	G3-B♭4	mode 1	uptempo	2	2
Sleep Without You	Young	B♭3-G5	mode 1	uptempo	3	2
Take Back Home Girl	Lane	A3-A5	mode 1	ballad	1	**4**
Gun Powder and Lead	Lambert	F3-B♭4	mode 1	uptempo	2	**2**
What Hurts the Most	Steele	E♭3-C5	mode 1	ballad	**4**	4
I Hope	Barrett	G3-D5	mode 1	uptempo	2	**3**
She's In Love with The Boy	Ims	G#3-C#5	mode 1	uptempo	1	2
Jesus, Take the Wheel	James	F#3-E5	mode 1	ballad	**3**	2
Tennessee Whiskey	Dillon	D#4-A5	mode 1	ballad	**5**	2
Any Man of Mine	Twain	E♭4-D6	mode 1	uptempo	3	2

CHAPTER 5

GENRE: MUSICAL THEATRE

Mixing and belting are two prominent technical terms in musical theatre singing. The way singers approach which vocal technique to use depends on the style of musical theater and/or the era in which the piece was written. In this chapter, I will discuss the different eras of musical theatre and the general expectations from an aural standpoint for each era, concentrating at the end of this chapter mostly on musical theatre stylistic choices and techniques for songs written in the past fifty years. I will also discuss a handful of different types of musicals and the tone and technique encouraged for those. I will then go into detail on the graded scale for both agility and improvisation from the repertoire tables in the previous chapter, explaining my reasoning for each song's grade, and how and why newer musical theatre and CCM singers can benefit from learning these songs.

According to theatretrip.com, the eras of musical theatre are broken into the following time periods, beginning in the 1920s for the purposes of this paper:

The Jazz Age (1920-1939)
The Golden Age (1940-1959)
Post-Golden Age (1960-1969)
Pre-Contemporary (1970-1999)
Contemporary (2000-present)[51]

Because of the popular music styles written in each era, there are different technical and stylistic goals for producing a sound that is authentic to the period in which it was written. Below are a few stylistic or technical words associated with the primary eras of musical theatre[52]:

The Jazz Age: Wide vibrato, more scoops and slides between pitches, brassy timbre
The Golden Age: 'classical' vowels, taller and rounder mouth shape, "darker" or "warmer" timbre
Post-Golden Age: a bit more like the brassiness of The Jazz Age, some "rock" edginess depending on the show i.e. grit/growl, spread vowels/speech-like quality
Pre-Contemporary: play with vibrato and straight tone as color choices, belt, less rhythmically strict than eras before, speech-like quality
Contemporary: belt, mix, higher male-voiced songs, lower female-voiced songs (less head voice for female-voiced songs), timbre shifts mid-song for emotional effects and vocal effects, straight-tone, bright vowels

[51] Stacy Karyn. "Musical Theatre Time Periods – A Full Breakdown." Theatre Trip, September 2, 2022. https://www.theatretrip.com/musical-theatre-time-periods/.
[52] These stylistic words are generalized and do not represent all the tone qualities perfectly.

Contemporary Commercial Music, in all genres, encourages versatility in tone colors and technical choices. Like in the broad definition of CCM, Musical Theatre also has sub-genres that ask for unique timbres. A few of those sub-genres, or types of musicals, are Jukebox Musicals, Rock/Pop Musicals, and Revue Musicals. Jukebox Musicals are shows written with music by one CCM artist or featuring only songs that were already written for the radio and not composed specifically for the musical itself. Because of the vast array of styles of music in Jukebox Musicals, singers who audition for these productions must understand how to manipulate their voices to sound like a jazz singer, pop singer, R&B singer, rock singer, and so forth. The importance for all singers to learn how to color their voices depending on the genre is especially true for modern musical theatre professionals. Singers in Rock/Pop Musicals must have access to a grit or a growl in their voices, as well as be able to break their tone (flip between head and chest voice, making it sound like a crack or a yodel). Vocal agility is also important when singing rock/pop musical theatre. Below is more information on Agility and Improvisation grades for ten musical theatre pieces, and why they are suitable pieces for students to learn how to sing.

AGILITY

Agility 1: "If I Sing" from *Closer Than Ever* by Richard Maltby Jr. and David Shire (1989)

This is a musical revue which means there is no spoken dialogue, just songs. It was premiered in 1989 and the music takes inspiration from jazz and Golden Age when it comes to vocal production. This piece is a ballad with a classical feel. Most song written in the style of Golden Age or Post-Golden Age are not written with fast melismatic sections, so vocal agility in this piece is not necessary.

Agility 2: "What Do I Need with Love" from *Thoroughly Modern Millie* by Jeanine Tesori and Dick Scanlan (2002)

Thoroughly Modern Millie is a musical taking place in 1922. While the show opened on Broadway in 2002, it is considered a Jazz Age Musical because of the style of songs. This musical is based on a movie that came out in 1967 and included some of the songs that were later in the musical. While some Jazz Age Musical Theatre songs could require more agility, this

one is a great starter piece for someone wanting to practice how quickly they can move their voice between pitches. There is a lot of fast-moving chromaticism in the verses of this song which encourages intonation and agility, even though there aren't many words that have multiple pitches on one syllable (such as a riff or a run).

Agility 3: "Burn" from *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda (2015)

Hamilton is a rap, hip-hop, and R&B-inspired musical that premiered in 2015 off-Broadway. This piece rates a 3 in the agility scale because there are a few instances of riffs and runs in which the singer is asked to sing multiple pitches on one syllable, at somewhat of a quick pace. One example is the three pitches on the word "mine" in the following passage:

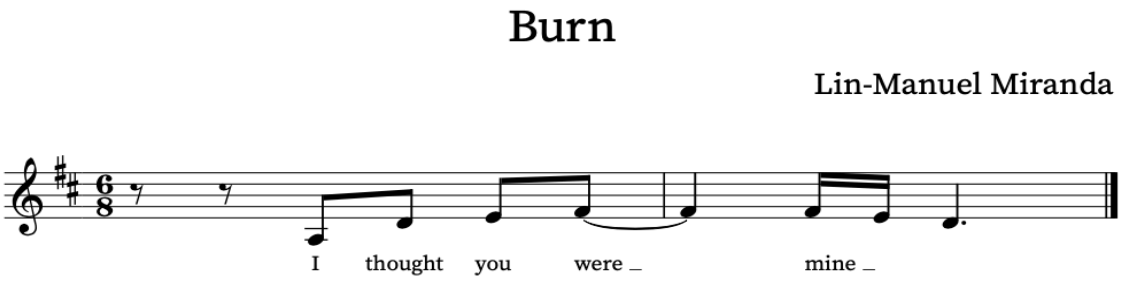

Figure 15. "Burn," words and music by Lin-Manuel Miranda, transcription mine (New York: 5000 Broadway Music, 2015).

This miniature run can be created into a warmup on the same word or switching the word to three "da-da-da's" so that the singer has articulator muscles to help move their voice quicker – leading up to trying this run on the word "mine," at the originally tempo of the song. There are also opportunities to take more liberties than what is written in the score (which could also be discussed in improvisation), so the singer could work on creating their own moments of agility.

Agility 4: "Heart of Stone" from *Six* by Lucy Moss and Toby Marlow (2017)

Six is a musical that was first performed in the UK in 2017. It's a pop/rock musical that is written as a pop concert. Since the genre is contemporary, it's important for all the actors in this musical to have advanced skills in agility and improvisation. Although there are not many riffs or runs written in the score for "Heart of Stone," there are many places like the following passage where "riffs ad lib." is written:

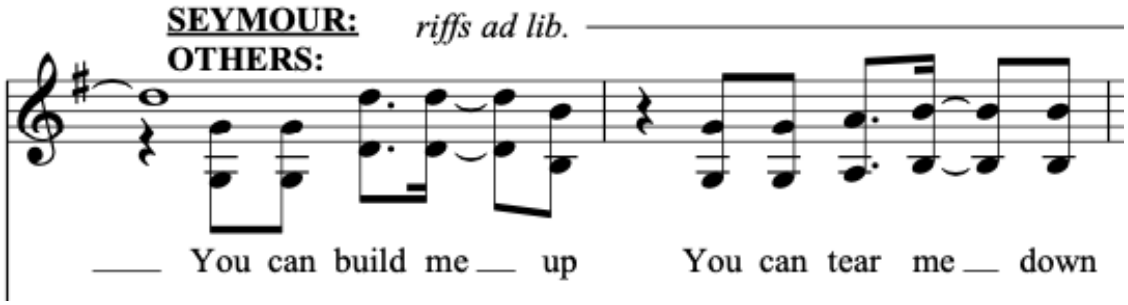

Figure 16. “Heart of Stone,” words and music by Lucy Moss and Toby Marlow, transcriber Joe Beighton (London: 6 Music Ltd., 2019).

To ad lib. and riff, the singer must have control over their voice so it may move quickly while they are creating their own riffs and runs. There are many more instances in this song where the original singer, Natalie Paris, riffs in places not marked in the physical score. Because this is a ballad, this song is rated Agility 4 since there can be different levels of difficulty the singer chooses when riffing, and they are able to slow down the riffs to make them more accessible, if needed.

Agility 5: “Mad Hatter” from *Finding Wonderland* by Jack Murphy and Frank Wildhorn (2011)

Although there are not many notated riffs or runs on the sheet music of this piece, every version you hear is abounding with both. In contemporary musical theatre songs, it’s more likely that the singers and performers must improvise and add some riffs and runs than there being written riffs and runs in the score. This song also deserves a ranking of 5 for agility because of the chromatic melody line and the fast tempo. Although agility is mostly defined in this paper as the pace your voice can move in a melismatic fashion, it’s also just as difficult to tune quick-moving, chromatic passages, of which this song is full.

IMPROVISATION

Improvisation 1: “I Could Have Danced All Night” from *My Fair Lady* by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe (1956)

My Fair Lady was written in 1956 in the era of Golden Age. Because classical timbre was expected in many musicals during this period, improvisation in pieces is not as accepted and is

also rarely required in musicals of this era. The melody line for this song should be sung as written.

Improvisation 2: “When the Music Played” from *Doctor Zhivago* by Lucy Simon and Michael Weller (2011)

Written in 2011, *Doctor Zhivago* is a contemporary musical with classically-based songs. The character who sings “When the Music Played” is a soprano, meaning she is in her head voice and mix much more than her belt. Because of the expected tone for this song, singing the written melody exactly is strongly encouraged. A little improvisation could be done in a tasteful way, because it’s a contemporary musical.

Improvisation 3: “Michael in the Bathroom” from *Be More Chill* by Joe Iconis (2013)

Be More Chill was written in 2015 and had a brief stint on Broadway before it prematurely closed. The music is of the contemporary genre and, while there are some riffs and runs written in the melody line of the score, there are other opportunities for improvisation with the melody or adding on pitches to longer-held notes. An example of a riff written in the music is below, and it can also be inspiration for a warmup and/or another improvisatory riff the singer chooses to add elsewhere in the song.

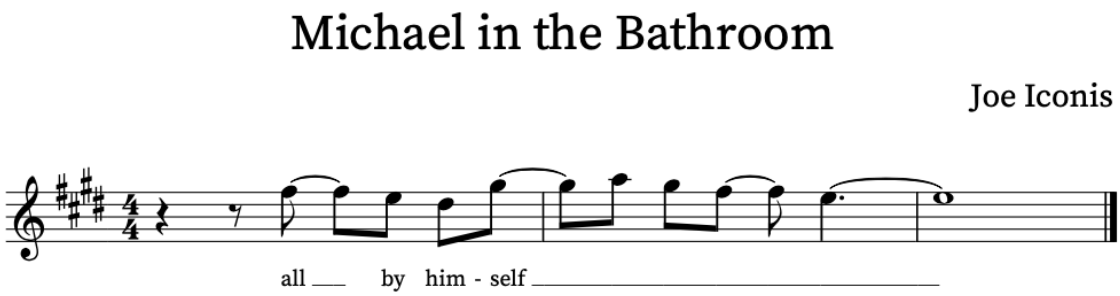

Figure 17. “Michael in the Bathroom,” words and music by Joe Iconis, transcription mine (New York: Mr. Joe Iconis Tunes, 2013).

Improvisation 4: “Run Away with Me” from *The Mad Ones* by Kait Kerrigan and Bree Lowdermilk (2005)

The Mad Ones, formally known as *The Unauthorized Autobiography of Samantha Brown* was written in 2008 so it is a Contemporary Musical. This song could be sung straight, following

the printed sheet music perfectly, or it can be made unique, and the singer can improvise on many of the held-out notes at the ends of phrases. Jeremy Jordan does a great version of this song where he takes liberties with the melody throughout the song. It's important when learning to improvise that singers listen to many versions of a song in order to gain inspiration from others to lead them to their own improvisation lines.

Improvisation 5: "To My Angels" from *SuperYou* by Lourds Lane (2019)

This song deserves an improvisation grade of 5 because there are instances in almost every other measure where the singer can and should take liberties with the melody line. The style of this song is gospel, which I will discuss in Chapter 8. Gospel singing, historically, involves many riffs and runs which leads to lots of improvisation. The passage below includes a riff written in the music on "to my." This riff can be sung as-is, or the singer can take more liberties and create a longer riff. This is easily done with the sheet music in hand because there is no piano part underneath that measure, giving the singer plenty of time to create their own improvisatory moment.

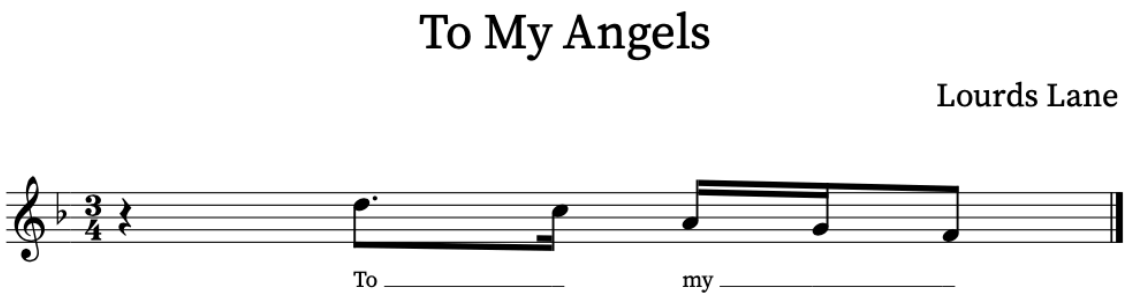

Figure 18. "To My Angels," words and music by Lourds Lane, transcription mine.

CHAPTER 6

GENRE: POP

For the purpose of this paper, my definition of pop music includes top 40, classic rock, R&B. Pop music also includes “singer-songwriter” hits, which describes music written and performed by the same artist in the style of folk/pop such as Joni Mitchell, John Mayer, and Sara Bareilles. Since this genre contains so many subgenres, this chapter will focus on three areas: riffing and agility, vocal timbre techniques associated with radio hits and R&B, and breath control. Riffing and vocal agility have already been discussed in previous chapters, and I will go into a bit more detail on how singers can expand those specific skills with the following songs. Vocal timbre techniques will describe how the singer should represent the emotion or expression of the song they are singing, given the artist and time period, as well as the sub-genre of pop, from which the song comes. Some techniques that will be discussed are breathy versus pure tones (which have to do with breath control), cracks and voice flips, and vibrato pacing.

AGILITY

Agility 1: “Yellow Submarine” by John Lennon and Paul McCartney (1966)

This is an excellent introduction to agility song, especially for beginning singers and younger singers. There is one miniature riff in this whole piece, and it is below:

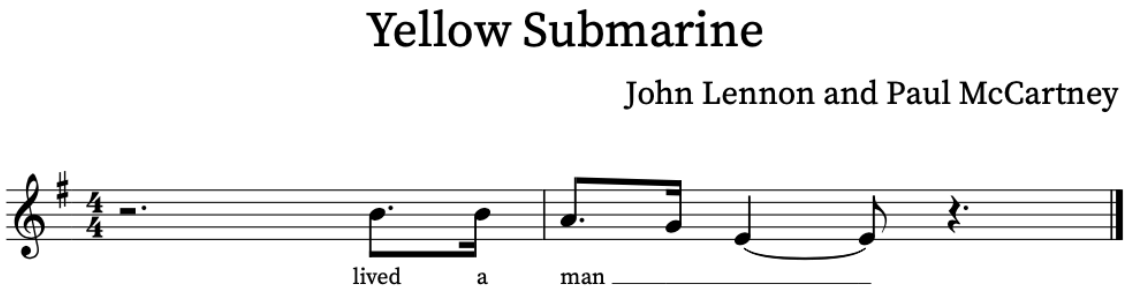

Figure 19. “Yellow Submarine,” words and music by John Lennon and Paul McCartney, transcription mine (Liverpool: Northern Songs Limited, 1966).

The singer can work on this riff by adding numbers to the riff, such as 1, 2, 3 or the pitch numbers 2, 1, 6 and taking the tempo slower until the singer is more comfortable with the individuality of the pitches. Then, the singer can sing the pattern on “da’s,” with a new “d” sound

articulating the pitch changes. Again, this exercise would be taken more slowly until the singer is more comfortable moving their voice more quickly. After the “da’s” are sung confidently at the tempo of the piece, the singer should slow down the pitches and sing on the word “man.” Besides this one riff, this song does not require any other melismatic moments and the melody line is so well-known, adding riffs and runs would be inappropriate.

Agility 2: “Drops of Jupiter” by Pat Monahan, Jimmy Stafford, Rob Hotchkiss, Charlie Colin, Scott Underwood (2001)

Originally performed by Train, this song teeters between Agility 2 and Agility 3 because of the first riff of the piece on the word “hair/hey’’:

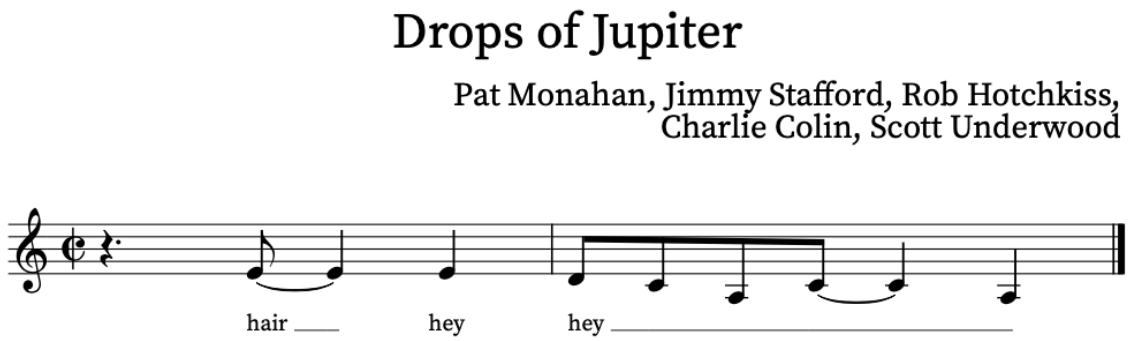

Figure 20. “Drops of Jupiter,” words and music by Pat Monahan, Jimmy Stafford, Rob Hotchkiss, Charlie Colin, Scott Underwood, transcription mine (London: EMI April Music Inc., Blue Lamp Music, EMI Blackwood Music Inc., and Wunderwood Music, 2001).

The original time the singer sings ‘hey’ could be the first attempt the singer makes to show their unique vocal style. This could include a scoop leading up to the pitch, a voice crack, a growl, or vocal try. The singer of Train scoops up to the pitch in the original recording, and it would be wise of the student to listen to the original to gain inspiration on the effect this scoop brings to the song. Although this run has seven pitches total, it’s not a fast passage and students should be able to learn this one more easily than other seven-note runs that are faster.

Another effect the student can learn with this piece is control over their vibrato. Some words call for vibrancy on the pitch, but many in this genre of classic rock, do not.

Agility 3: “Thinking Out Loud” by Ed Sheeran and Amy Wadge (2014)

While there are quite a few shorter riffing passages in this song, there is one in particular that is good for singers to add to their list of agility warmups. This riff comes at the end of the piece on the word “are.” The pitches are below: 3, 2, 1, 6, 5, or “mi, re, do, la, sol”:

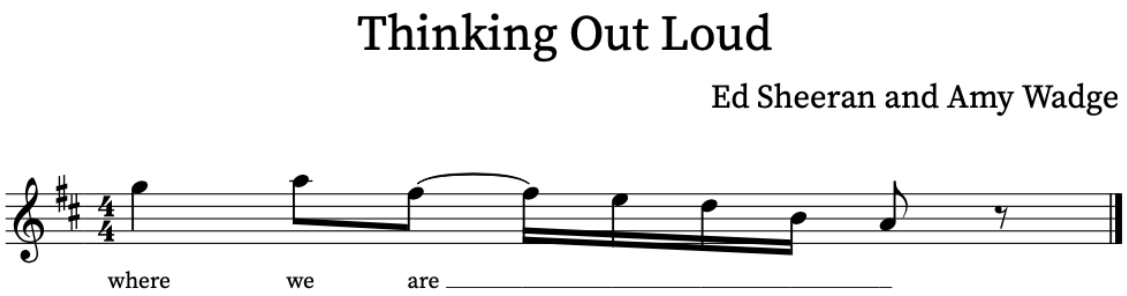

Figure 21. “Thinking Out Loud,” words and music by Ed Sheeran and Amy Wadge, transcription mine (London: Sony/ATV Music Publishing Ltd. And BDI Music Ltd., 2014).

The singer can approach this riff by using the technique discussed in previous paragraphs – putting a consonant in front of a vowel on each pitch, slowing it down then speeding it up. The other riffs in this song are shorter but they are still frequent, which is why a grade of 3 was assigned.

Agility 4: “Goodbye Yellow Brick Road” by Elton John and Bernie Taupin, arr. Sara Bareilles (1973)

For singers who possess a wider vocal range and agility in both their chest voice and mixed voice (or head voice), “Goodbye Yellow Brick Road” is an excellent piece. Beginning in a low register and requiring lots of flips in the voice (flipping between chest and head voice, or clear and breathy tones), agility is necessary from the beginning of the piece. When singing pop songs, singers should be able to flip between registers with more of a dramatic timbre shift than we would ask for in classical or more classic music theatre songs. The yodeling exercise in Chapter 2 would be helpful for encouraging singers to have a more prominent switch between chest and head voice. For example, the word “down” in the first phrase of this song can be sung as a straight chest or head note, or the singer can choose to mimic Sara Bareilles’s rendition and flip from chest to head when switching pitches.

Agility is not just how quickly the voice can move between pitches on the same vowel/word, but how quickly the singer can switch timbres and flip between registers and tone colors. There are also many riffs and runs in this piece, both written out in the sheet music, and other opportunities for the singer to create their own. The most challenging riff is below, and the options Bareilles takes are even more "riffy" than this:

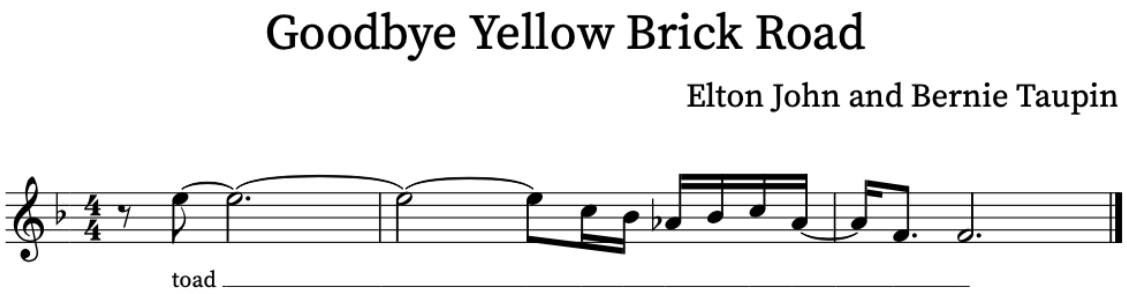

Figure 22. "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road," words and music by Elton John and Bernie Taupin, arr. Sara Bareilles, transcription mine (London: Universal/Dick James Music Ltd., 1973).

Agility 5: "Hero" by Mariah Carey and Walter Afanasieff (1993)

Mariah Carey is known for her vocal agility, and this song is no exception. Her work falls in the genre of R&B and, historically in that genre, there are many more riffs and runs than in other radio pop songs or rock songs. There are not as many notated riffs in the sheet music, but if you listen to the original song, you can gain inspiration for many riffs. This deserves a grade of Agility 5 because there are endless opportunities for added melismatic gestures.

The one riff that's written in this sheet music and is repeated a couple of times on different word pairings is below:

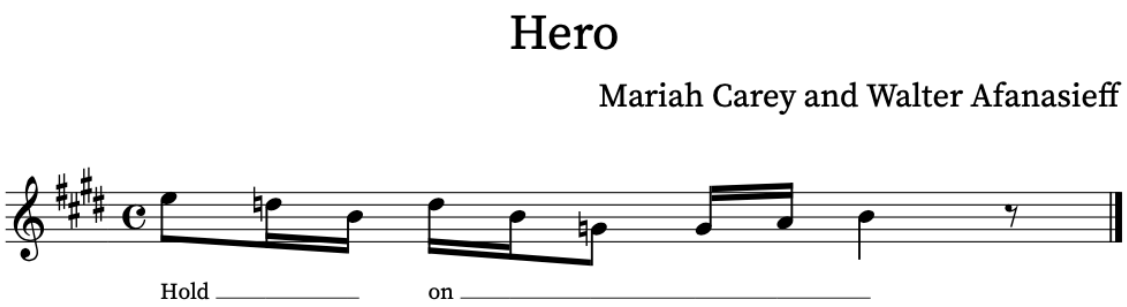

Figure 23. "Hero," words and music by Mariah Carey and Walter Afanasieff, transcription mine (New York: WB Music Corp., Wallyworld Music, Songs of Universal, Inc., and Rye Songs, 1993).

IMPROVISATION

Improvisation 1: “Bright” by Sydney Sierota, Noah Sierota, Graham Sierota, Jamie Sierota, Jeffrey David, and Maureen McDonald (2015)

For beginning singers and younger singers, this is another excellent song. It’s happier and more uptempo, and has a simple melody that is easy to follow and replicate. It is encouraged for the singer to stick to a singable melody.

Improvisation 2: “Kiss from a Rose” by Seal (1994)

“Kiss from a Rose” is an R&B/Soul song that can be sung just as Seal originally recorded it, or the singer can take liberties with the melody and create their own take on the song. This piece deserves an Improvisation 2 grade because, although possibilities are endless for making any song your own, this one can be sung more like the original with only a few added improvisational lines as well.

Improvisation 3: “Water Under the Bridge” by Adele Adkins (2016)

The way Adele performs the songs she writes includes her own improvisation on the melody. Adele’s music contains hints of pop and soul genres, so much of her music calls for some improvisation and liberties taken by the singer. If people try to imitate everything Adele does, that is a good start for learning how to better access one’s vocal agility, but if a singer performs any Adele song, it’s important for them to make it their own. Songs that everybody knows, including popular radio hits like this song, become monotonous after a listener hears the same attempted version repeatedly. It deserves an improvisation 3 grade because the melody line moves so quickly, so there isn’t as much room within the measures or phrases to add more than a few notes of improvisation.

Improvisation 4: “All of Me” by John Stephens and Toby Gad (2013)

Not only does this song encourage the singer to improvise, but it also requires a lot of vocal agility from the singer. This is another R&B song, so historically speaking, riffs and runs are expected. John Legend adds a lot of improvisation in his recording of “All of Me”, and since there are many places where “all” is held out over a few measures, there is more opportunity for the singer to make up their own riff. See below for what is written, as a starting point:

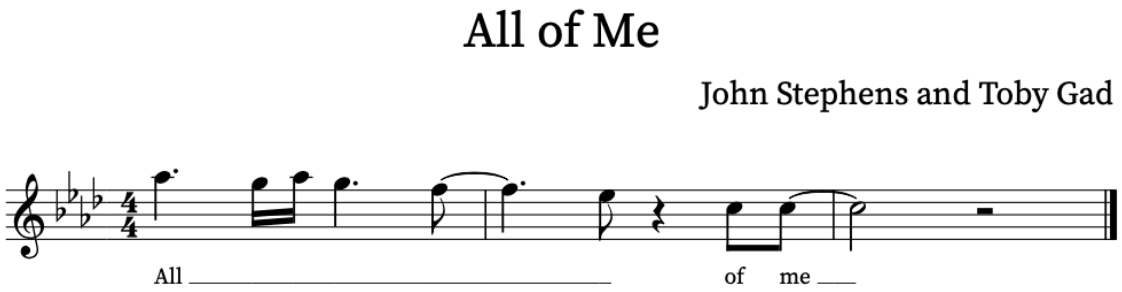

Figure 24. “All of Me,” words and music by John Stephens and Toby Gad, transcription mine (London: Gad Songs and John Legend Publishing, 2013).

Improvisation 5: “Almost is Never Enough” by Ariana Grande, Harmony Samuels, Al Sherrod Lambert, Helen Culver, Moses Samuels, and Olaniyi Akinkunmi (2013)

As already demonstrated, most R&B songs will have a lot of room for riffing and improvisation. Ariana Grande is known for her riffs and runs, and one of her riffs is transcribed below:

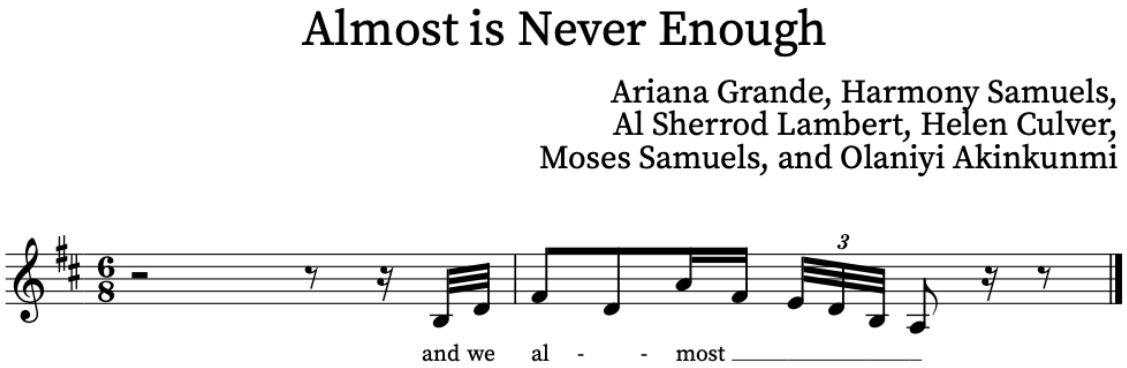

Figure 25. “Almost is Never Enough,” words and music by Ariana Grande, Harmony Samuels, Al Sherrod Lambert, Helen Culver, Moses Samuels, and Olaniyi Akinkunmi, transcription mine (Grandarimusic, Universal Music Corporation, C Reece Songs, Songs of Universal Inc, Darkchild Songs, H Money Music, EMI April Music Inc, Frequency Songz, Songz of Frequency, Songs Of Peer Ltd, Beyond Our Environment Inc, Penmenship Music, Kobalt Music Services America Inc, and Millennium Kid Music, 2013).

Normally in sheet music, riffs like this are not notated. However, it’s important occasionally for a singer new to improvisation, especially one who is classically trained and can

read music at a high level, to be able to see what some of the riffs and runs look like, notated with the rhythm, so they can work on developing their own styles. Another notated riff is below:

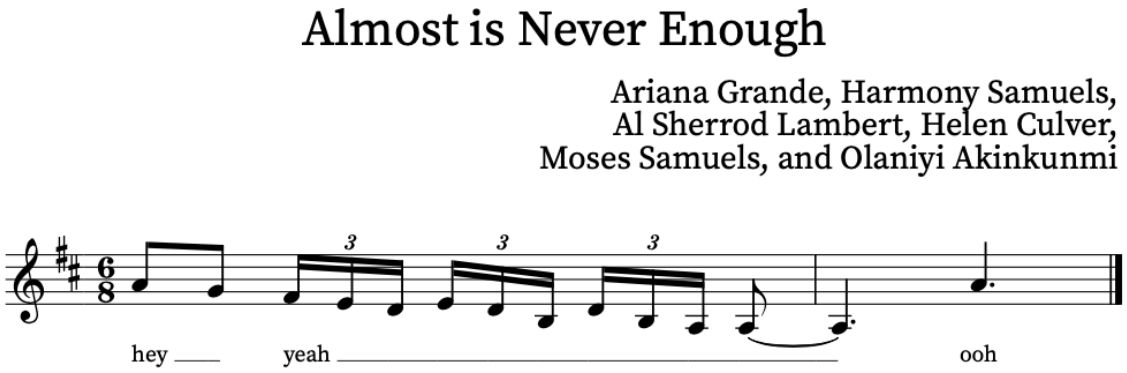

Figure 26. “Almost is Never Enough,” words and music by Ariana Grande et all, transcription mine (Grandarimusic et all, 2013).

CHAPTER 7

GENRE: JAZZ

There are a few things that separate jazz vocals from other CCM genres. Three of the more noticeable differences will be discussed in this chapter, followed by more repertoire analysis for Agility and Improvisation grades. The three most noticeable differences between jazz and other CCM genres are the amount of breath a singer lets escape in the tone (breathiness), the rate at which the singers' vibrato oscillates (how fast or slow the vibrato is), and the number of effects a singer adds to the vocal line such as breaks/cracks, scoops, and slides. This is the genre of music where the singer must be able to access multiple colors and timbres in their voice to sing these songs authentically. When a jazz song repeats sections, it is common that the repeated section be sung differently, whether that means adding more improvisation with the melody line or creating diversity in ones' vocal colors. This is similar to the da capo aria in ABA form.

Another aspect of jazz, especially as it pertains to improvisation, is scatting. Scatting could be the topic of an entire paper, so for the purpose of this chapter, I will discuss a brief history of scatting and when a singer might incorporate this technique into their song. Some say the theory behind scat singing is because singers would forget the lyrics and create their own syllables and sounds to keep the vocal line going. Scat singing is "the usual medium for jazz vocal improvisation and is usually understood as singers imitating instrumentalists.[53] It is done during the solo sections, usually when the A section comes back to repeat after singing through the whole song once and can be utilized to mimic other instruments such as the saxophone, trumpet, or percussive sounds. A singer who scats would usually not stick to the melody on these solos, thus improvising every time they scatted in live performance or on a recording. Improvisation in jazz can also have similarities to riffs described in previous chapters:

[53] William R. Bauer, "Scat Singing: A Timbral and Phonemic Analysis," *Current Musicology, 2001*, 303, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/scat-singing-timbral-phonemic-analysis/docview/1037039/se-2.

improvisation is a variation of melody to add a singers' own mark to the piece, which will also be the focus of the improvisation grades for this chapter.

AGILITY

Agility 1: "New York, New York" by John Kander and Fred Ebb (1977)

Although it can be argued that all jazz music requires some need for vocal agility due to the chromatic nature of most jazz melodies, there are some songs that can be sung without added riffs and runs so that a newer jazz singer can learn how to stylize their voice without adding more difficulty to the song with agility. "New York, New York" is a great example of a song that is accessible for a beginning jazz singer. There are a few lines that are chromatic, but otherwise this song doesn't require much agility. It's also a song that is well-known, so the singer could already be comfortable with the melody before learning it. It's a great piece to encourage the singer to experiment with vibrato pacing and they can play around with the width of their vibrato.

Agility 2: "Cheek to Cheek" by Irving Berlin (1935)

This is a great piece for newer jazz singers to learn because of the ascending melody line in the following passage:

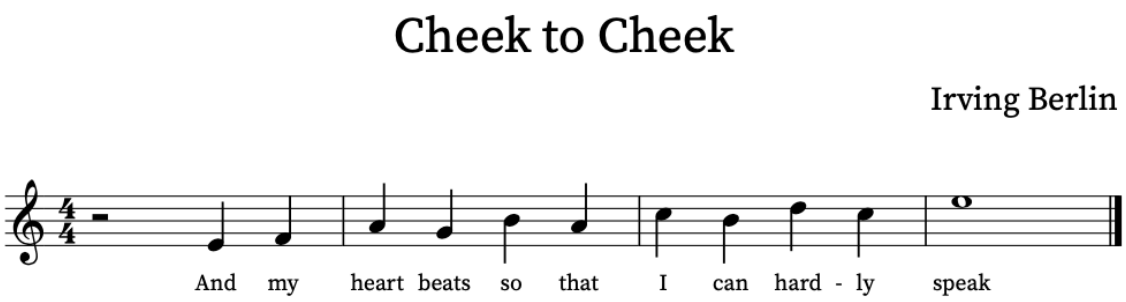

Figure 27. "Cheek to Cheek," words and music by Irving Berlin, transcription mine (Irving Berlin, 1935).

Tuning pitches that go down by a second and then up by a third are more challenging than one might think by simply looking at this music. It's important for the singer to not have too much weight (throatiness, depth, chest voice, fullness) when singing a passage like this. It will then be more possible to move from pitch to pitch by keeping the resonance all in the same

place, especially on the descending parts of the melody. Agility is more accessible when the tone of the singers' voice is lighter and more forward. This passage specifically will help a singer access agility in a cleaner and more calm way.

Agility 3: "Orange Colored Sky" by Milton Delugg and Willie Stein (1950)

Any jazz standard in which the melody of the entire song is repeated means that the vocal line should be improvised or riffed more the second time through, so as to not bore the audience with monotony of the same melody twice. There isn't anything notated in the sheet music to show the vocalist how to vary the A section the second time, but the singer should be aware that the melody can be altered.[56] This can also include changing up the rhythm in some places, adding extra notes here and there or full riffs or runs, and vocal effects such as slides or scoops or vibrato differentiations.

Along with changing up the melody the second time through, it's also a great opportunity for a newer jazz vocalist to learn about chromaticism and intonation with passages such as this one:

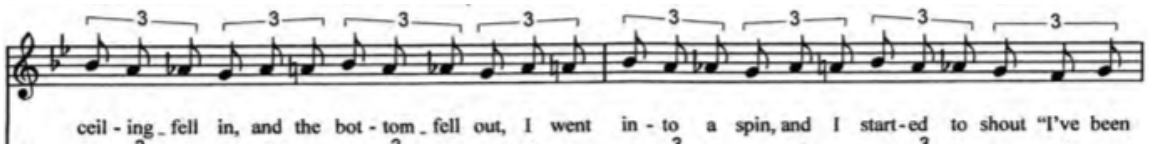

Figure 28. "Orange Colored Sky," words and music by Milton Delugg and Willie Stein (New York: Amy Dee Music Corp., 1950), 2.

Agility 4: "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" by Don Raye and Hughie Prince (1941)

I have mostly been discussing agility as riffs and runs but have briefly mentioned the importance of intonation as well. Jazz chord progressions are generally more complex than those of pop of R&B songs; major/minor, secondary dominant, augmented sixth, and Neapolitan chords are common. The result of this harmonic variety is that jazz melody can be chromatic by nature, and intonation is especially crucial for singing in this style. This jazz standard is very challenging to tune, as every line contains chromaticism, and the tempo is fast. This is normally performed in

[56] Milton Delugg and Willie Stein, "Orange Colored Sky", New York: Amy Dee Music Corp., 1950.

three parts like the Andrews Sisters performed it in 1941, as well as Bette Midler in 1972, but one can learn this song as a solo and sing the melody. The singers' ability to successfully tune all of the pitches in this fast tempo is a true challenge.

Agility 5: "At Last" by Mack Gordon and Harry Warren (1942)

Etta James made this beautiful piece famous with her soulful rendition, recorded in 1960. It deserves an agility grade of 5 due to the following runs, for instance:

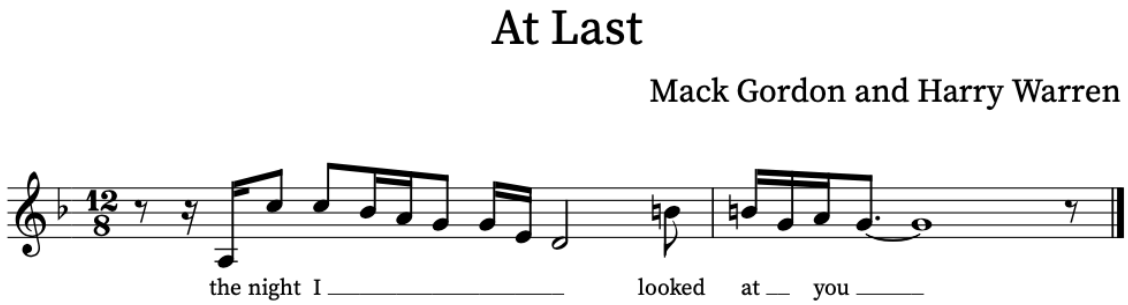

Figure 29. "At Last," words and music by Mack Gordon and Harry Warren, transcription mine (London: EMI Music Publishing Ltd., 1942).

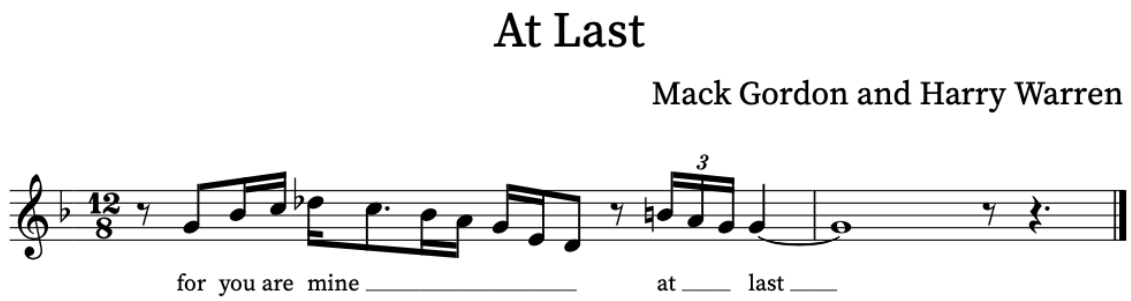

Figure 30. "At Last," words and music by Mack Gordon and Harry Warren, transcription mine (London: EMI Music Publishing Ltd., 1942).

The first riff on "I" is a waterfall riff, as discussed in the Waterfall Agility warmup in Chapter 3. Doing that warmup before attempting this song will be helpful for any singer. Not only are there many riffs and runs that Etta James sings on the recording from which other singers can gain inspiration, but one should also pay attention to the rhythm with which she articulates her runs. This can be incorporated in other songs in which the singer attempts improvisation as they advance in their ability to control their voices.

This song is not only great for advancing vocal agility skills, but it is helpful for a jazz singer to find different timbres and colors in their voice, as well as to incorporate scoops and breaks. To "scoop" means literally to slide up or down from one pitch to another. To "break" is to produce an audible crack or break in the vocal tone by engaging muscles in your throat to stop the vocal folds from oscillating at a consistent speed, making them hit together in a harsher manner than when producing clear, sustained pitches. Although this song is very well known, it is still excellent to advance one's skills in jazz.

IMPROVISATION

Improvisation 1: "Summertime" by George Gershwin and DuBose Heyward (1935)

This song is a great opportunity for a teacher to introduce a jazz song to a student with a classical background. If performed in the original key where the singer begins the first line on F#5, head voice will be the prominent register used, due to the range of this piece. Although any jazz song can include improvisation, "Summertime", as demonstrated by Audra McDonald, can still be performed in an authentic jazz style by sticking to the melody.[57]

Improvisation 2: "Fly Me to The Moon" by Bart Howard (1954)

When it comes to improvisation in jazz, as mentioned in the description for "Orange Colored Sky," it is important that when a song repeats a section or simply repeats the entire melody from the very beginning that the singer takes liberties to change up the melody. If you look at the sheet music for this piece, the melody line is very repetitive.[58] It is the singers' responsibility to take the melody as an outline and create their own additions to "spice it up". The best way to start doing this in this song is to change up the rhythm. "Fly Me to The Moon" can be sung by any gender, in any key, and repeats the entire melody at least twice through, depending on the arrangement the singer chooses. Making the repeat different than the first time through should be the goal for this piece, and it's a great selection for jazz singers of any level.

Improvisation 3: "Blue Skies" by Irving Berlin (1927)

[57] Audra McDonald is also a classically-trained singer, with training from New York's Juilliard School. This information was found on audramcdonald.com.

[58] Bart Howard, "Fly Me to the Moon," New York: Hampshire House Publishing Corp., 1954.

Another thing to note about singing or performing jazz standards is that the tempo of the original the song is not the only tempo in which other musicians can use. A piece that was originally written as a ballad can be made into an uptempo song, and vice versa. The tempo marking for this song is moderato, which means the beats per minute (BPM) are about 108-120. Since it's a bit faster, improvisation can be approached differently than in a standard jazz ballad in the sense that instead of adding riffs and runs on held-out notes, the singer can change up the melody in this piece to make the repeat of the chorus unique. An example of the written melody for a few measures is below:

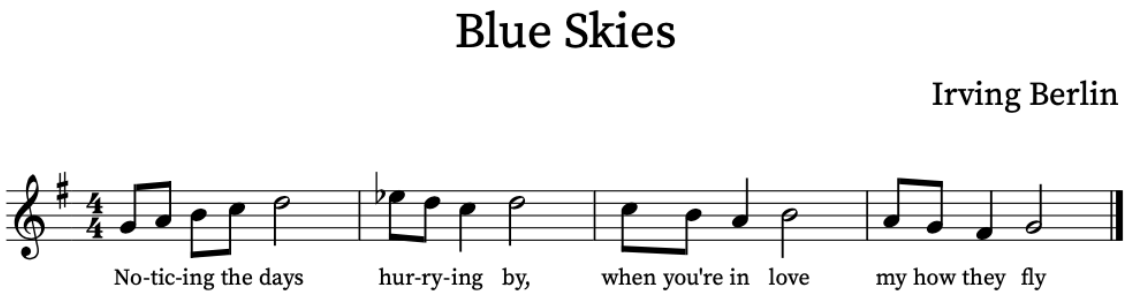

Figure 31. "Blue Skies,", words and music by Irving Berlin, transcription mine, (Irving Berlin, 1927).

Instead of sticking to this exact melody every time the singer sings this passage, one could take the second pitch of "hurrying by" and "when you're in love" and move it up a fourth to change up the melody. These pitch fluctuations can be added in other sections of the song as well.

Improvisation 4: "My Funny Valentine" by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart (1937)

All songs can be transposed depending on the vocalists needs, and most jazz standards can also be adapted to fit the arrangement of the singer's and band's choosing. There are many different arrangements for this piece, but the version of "My Funny Valentine" that will be discussed is Sarah Vaughan's arrangement.[59] She takes liberties at the end of this piece with improvising extra lines of the words "each day is Valentine's… Stay Valentine." Any other jazz

[59] Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, performed by Sarah Vaughan, "My Funny Valentine" (New York: WB Music Corp., 1937), https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/mtd.asp?ppn=MN0102309.

singer can use this tool to add on as many of these phrases they choose, doing something different with the pitches or rhythms each time they repeat the following phrase:

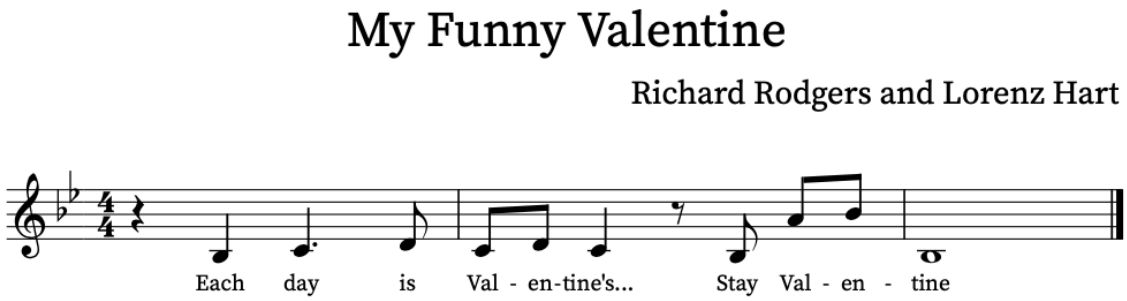

Figure 32. “My Funny Valentine,” words and music by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, transcription mine (New York: WB Music Corp., 1937).

There is also room in this song for the singer to transpose up an octave for some entrances, just as one other example of improvisation. For example, instead of always beginning the phrases of the verse on a low G3, the singer can opt to start a few of the phrases by singing a G4.

Along with improvisation, “My Funny Valentine” is a great teaching song to encourage students to listen to the words they are singing and be able to connect to them, as well as to connect to the musicality and instrumentation/arrangement of the piece so as to best convey the feeling of the piece. This song has a bit of a juxtaposition between the implication of the words and the overall vibe of it – meaning the text is sarcastic but the song is in a minor key, so it sounds sadder than the words convey.

Improvisation 5: “Misty” by Johnny Burke and Errol Garner (1955)

Ella Fitzgerald’s rendition of this song has many moments of her own improvisation from which other singers can gain inspiration, or even copy. There are many improvisational moments notated in the sheet music, like this one below:

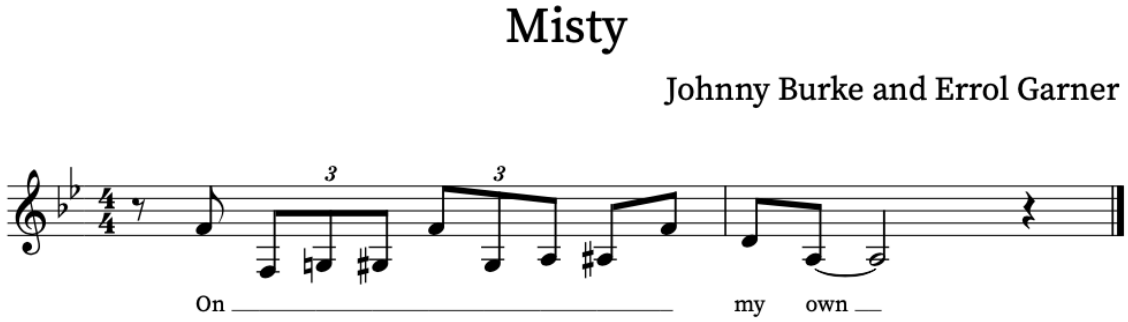

Figure 33. “Misty,” words and music by Johnny Burke and Errol Garner, transcription mine (New York: Octave Music Publishing Corp., Marke Music Publishing Co. Inc., Reganesque Music, Limerick Music, and My Dad’s Songs, Inc., 1955).

One could copy what Ella sang and what is written above or gain inspiration to create their own riff over these measures.

Besides improvisation, riffs, and runs, this song’s range is also extremely challenging. The timbre of the voice should be soulful, breathy, and carry some weight to do this song justice and sing it in an authentic way. The singer should also take care in switching back and forth between a clear/resonant tone and a breathy one. An example of where the singer should not carry weight up is in the following phrase at the end of the piece – it should end lightly with an obvious flip between “and” and “too”:

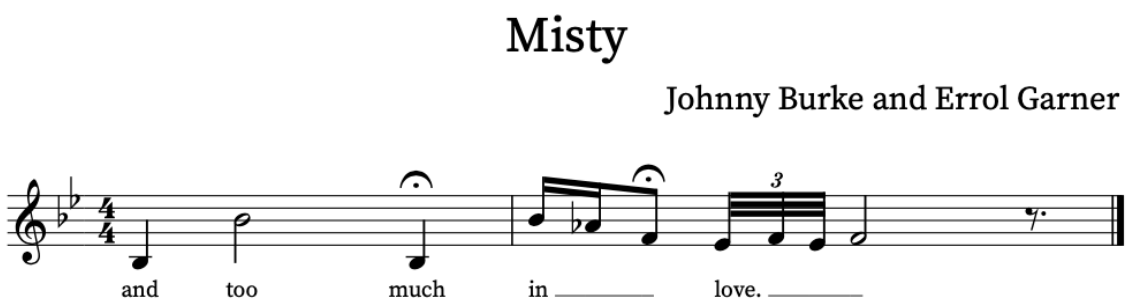

Figure 34. “Misty,” words and music by Johnny Burke and Errol Garner, transcription mine (New York: Octave Music Publishing Corp. et all, 1955).

CHAPTER 8

GENRE: CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN/GOSPEL

Contemporary Christian music originated from taking hymns written in the 1800s and early 1900s and adding jazz or extended chords (adding on the 7th, 9th or 13th of the scale) or melodic gestures to emulate the current radio hits, such as riffs and runs. African American Gospel music is a form of euphoric, rhythmic, spiritual music rooted in the solo and responsive church singing of the African American South, which laid the groundwork for rhythm and blues.This chapter will discuss songs that are contemporary Christian as well as gospel, different riffs and runs that are heard often and encouraged in both genres, and a bit about how to improvise when singing contemporary worship music at a church. This type of improvisation can be slightly different than improvisation discussed in earlier chapters as it can be in more of a call-and-response fashion.

Contemporary Christin Music in the United States was inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.[61] This genre has a broad historical background, but for the purpose of this paper, I will be focusing on the evolution of Christian hymns to rock, rap, country, and pop in the 1970s during the "Jesus Movement" until current times.[62] The style of 70s Christian music in some denominations began to include improvisation in worship which includes the singer improvising on the melody and adding a descant-like melody over the original melody if there were a choir or background singers with a soloist. This chapter will be focusing mostly on the style of Black gospel music. I am most comfortable sharing the following definition from M. Roger Holland II.

> "Black gospel music reflects the post-civil war social condition of African Americans in urban settings, emerging during the Great Depression. Ethnomusicologist Mellonee V. Burnim defines Black gospel music as the twentieth-century form of African American religious music that evolved in urban cities following the Great Migration of Blacks from

[61] KayNorton, *Singing and Wellbeing: Ancient Wisdom, Modern Truth* (New York: Routledge: 2016), 154.
[62] Kim Jones. "The Changing Face of Christian Music." Learn Religions. Learn Religions.

> the agrarian South in the period surrounding World Wars I and II. This music is described as Euro-American hymns whose message of hope and inspiration spoke to Black Christians and whose original musical and poetic forms lent themselves to Black 'improvisation.' It is these "Euro-American hymns" that were adapted by the Black religious community by injecting Black cultural idioms such as changing the original, written rhythms, use of syncopation, melodic embellishments, harmonic substitutions, tempo adjustments (either faster or slower), and even the interjection of vocal affirmations such as "yes" and "oh."[64]

African American gospel music was also highly influenced by Spirituals, which originated during the period of slavery in the American South. They would sing while working, and these songs would tell the story of their struggle with freedom, identity, heritage, and spirituality.[65] An important characteristic of spirituals which has been adopted into modern gospel music and contemporary Christian music is call and response. This is an improvisational technique in which a leader or soloist sings a phrase and the people around them repeat this phrase back to them. This approach is used today in many worship settings and is a large part of the improvisation grades that will be explained in this chapter.

AGILITY

Agility 1: "Because He Lives (Amen)" by Matt Maher (2015)

This version by Matt Maher is a great introduction for vocalists to contemporary worship music because the melody is accessible for all singers as the range is not wide. The melody line only includes one run, which is simply "mi, re, do" on the word "one." This is the simplest version of a run one can learn to sing. One can also change keys for all contemporary Christian songs so the singer is more comfortable, making this an easier song.

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[64] M. Richard Holland II, "Performing Religious Music of the African American Experience," Choral Journal Volume 61, Number 11, June/July 2021, 11, https://www.proquest.com/iimp/docview/2622617550/fulltextPDF/84939582B6204634PQ/8?accountid=4485.

[65] Natalie Koking. "The Evolution of African American Gospel Music." CincyPlay, March 22, 2018.

Agility 2: “Above All” by Lenny LeBlanc and Paul Baloche (1999)

There are many covers of this song ranging from a simplified hymn to a gospel version. Liberties can be taken with the melody, but it’s also not necessary to add much agility to sing this song well. The passage below is a great spot for a vocalist to take more liberty with agility on the word “earth”:

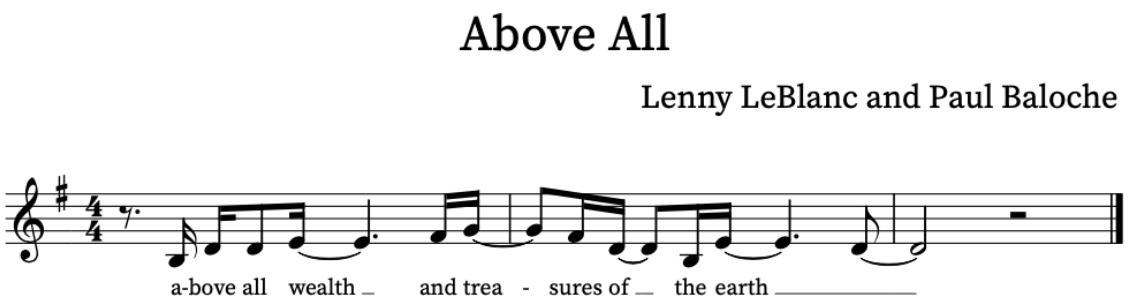

Figure 35. “Above All,” words and music by Lenny LeBlanc and Paul Baloche, transcription mine (Alabama: LenSongs Publishing and Integrity’s Hosanna! Music c/o Integrity Music, Inc., 1999).

Although there are only two notes in this music for the word “earth,” one can add a couple of other surrounding pitches to show more agility i this song.

Agility 3: “Precious Lord, Take My Hand” by Thomas A. Dorsey (1938)

In modern performance practice, this piece is usually sung in a more classical tone, with warmth and vibrato consistently throughout. Even when singing a gospel piece with this type of tone, the singer should also adhere to the roots of this genre and take liberties with the melody with riffs and runs. A few examples of spots where the singer can riff are as follows:

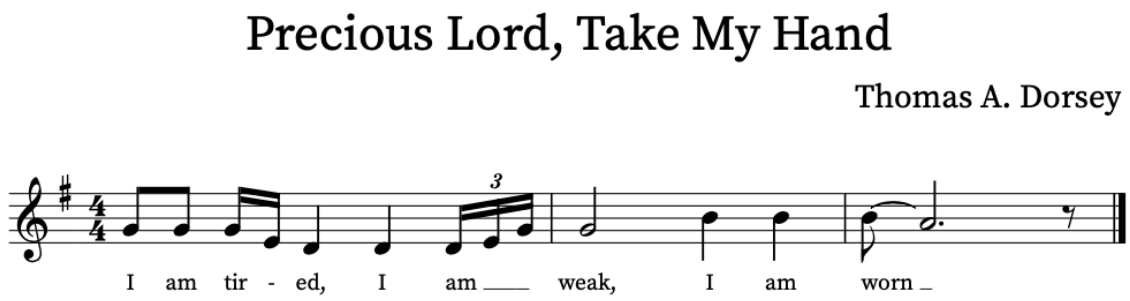

Figure 36. “Precious Lord, Take My Hand,” music and lyrics by Thomas A. Dorsey, transcription mine (California: Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp., 1938).

A very typical gospel riff that's not too challenging for a beginning gospel singer is "do, sol, la, sol," all as eighth notes. You can add this riff onto the word 'tired' in the first passage, or 'hand' in the second passage. While this riff isn't fast, it still encourages the singer to work vocal agility, especially in their more classical tone/head voice.

Agility 4: "For Your Glory" by Tasha Cobbs Leonard (2013)

Tasha Cobbs Leonard made this song famous back in 2013. She is accompanied by a gospel choir and has many opportunities to improvise and riff while the choir sings the melody. Instead of singing this song with a choir, one can take inspiration from Tasha's improvisation and practice their vocal agility while creating this as a solo. If the singer copies all of Tasha's riffs, they are sure to advance their agility skills, especially if they dissect her riffs and add numbers or consonants to them, slow them down, and then speed them up until they can successfully sing them at tempo.

Agility 5: "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" by Charles H. Gabriel and Civilla D. Martin (1905)

This is a hymn that was written by Civilla D. Martin in 1905. Since its origination, many artists have covered this. One famous cover by Lauren Hill and Tanya Blount in the movie *Sister Act II* includes many ad libs and is packed with vocal agility. It is less common for gospel songs to include the singer's riffing and run choices as notated passages in the sheet music, but simply by listening to many renditions, a singer can copy or create runs like those they hear. A very common agility passage for gospel songs is a waterfall riff, as mentioned in the vocal warmups in Chapter 3.

IMPROVISATION

Improvisation 1: "I Can Only Imagine" by Bart Millard (1999)

This song was released in 2001 and originally sung by a band called MercyMe, which is a Christian rock group. There have been other famous covers of this since its release, including the one by gospel artist Tamela Mann. The way a singer sings this song can be straight-forward, like MercyMe, or they can choose to take the gospel route and take more liberties with the melody. This received a grade of Improvisation 1 because it's a well-known song with a beautiful melody

that doesn't need anything additional to make this song better. Some pieces are most impactful when they stay true to the original melody and, in my opinion, this is one of those pieces.

Improvisation 2: "Reckless Love" by Cory Asbury, Caleb Culver, and Ran Jackson (2017)

Originally performed by Cory Asbury, this song is a standard worship and praise song that many non-denominational churches often play. There is room for adding one's own twist to the melody, but this song can also be sung with the original melody and still be just as effective in a worship environment. It's a great piece for beginning worship singers to explore vocal effects such as breaking on the word "oh" at the beginning of the chorus or scooping up to that word. See passage below:

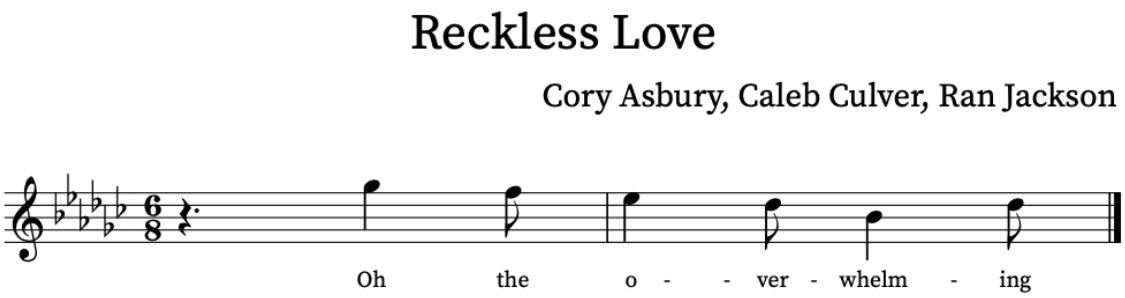

Figure 37. "Reckless Love," words and music by Cory Asbury, Caleb Culver, and Ran Jackson, transcription mine (California: Bethel Music Publishing and Watershed Publishing Group, 2017).

Improvisation 3: "Every Praise" by Hezekiah Walker (2013)

This piece is normally performed with a soloist and a gospel choir. The gospel choir repeats the refrain, "every praise is to our God, every word of worship with one accord, every praise, every praise is to our God." The melody of this line is repeated many times throughout the song, and it would be uninteresting if there was no improvisation. It's important that, when a lead is accompanied by a choir, they take liberties with the timing of the melody and words as a call-and-response format.

Improvisation 4: "Never Alone" by Kirk Franklin and Victoria Kelly (2018)

Victoria (Tori) Kelly is known for her very accurate and quick vocal agility skills. Pairing her voice with a gospel song takes this to the next level, due to the complexity of gospel music in general and her vocal acrobatics. This is another piece where there is a soloist over a gospel

choir, so improvisation is a must if the singer has backup vocalists. If you look at the sheet music for this song, you immediately see many riffs and runs, which are simply transcriptions of what Tori does on the record. The singer can use these as inspiration, and then create their own improvisation which suits their vocalism better.

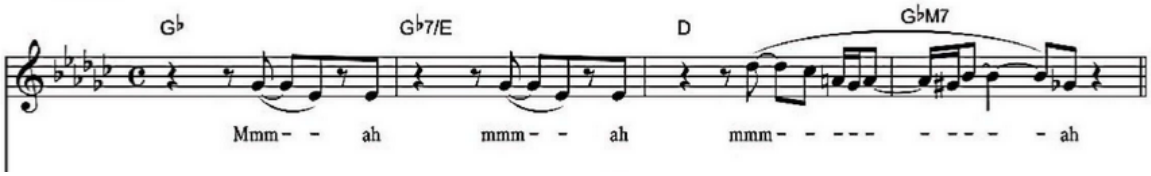

Figure 38. “Never Alone,” words and music by Kirk Franklin and Victoria Kelly, transcription www.poppiano.org (Tennessee: Tori Kelly Publishing, Sony/ATV Allegro, and Sony-ATV Tunes LLC, 2018).

Improvisation 5: “Amazing Grace” by John Newton (1779)

This is a well-known hymn that can be sung in any church denomination, in any style. One can approach this hymn as an introductory piece to singing Christian or Gospel music, or simply use this as a piece that can be molded into whatever genre the singer creates. The possibilities are endless with this song. A few notated examples of different approaches to this song are as follows:

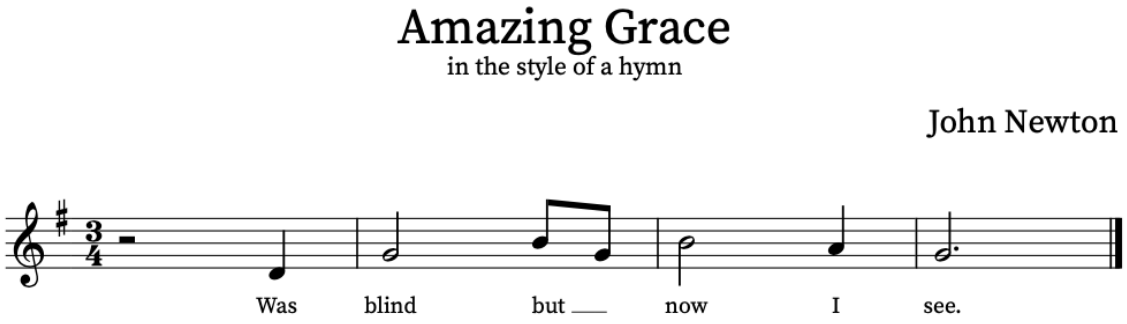

Figure 39. “Amazing Grace,” music and lyrics by John Newton, transcription mine (Public Domain, 1779).

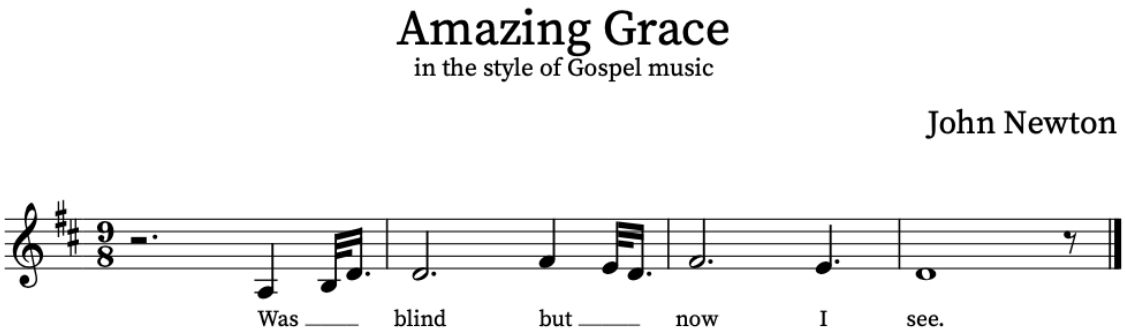

Figure 40. “Amazing Grace,” music and lyrics by John Newton, transcription mine (Public Domain, 1779).

The first example is from a hymnal, and the second is from an arrangement by Bernard Dewagtere in the traditional gospel style. Singers can take either of these transcriptions and create their own improvisation in the style of their choosing. For example, a country singer who sings gospel bluegrass may want to add yodels between the lower notes to the higher notes on the words “was blind” or “but now” (more on country timbres in the following chapter). A singer who is inspired by contemporary gospel singers can add more pitches to each of these words, such as a riff on the word “now,” or “I,” or “see.”

CHAPTER 9

GENRE: COUNTRY

Country music became recognized as a popular genre in America in the early twentieth century. It emerged as a working-class genre, combining Celtic and Irish roots as well as blues and gospel[66]. Like all the other genres discussed in this paper, there are subgenres of country such as honky tonk (featuring artists such as Hank Williams), bluegrass (Alison Krauss), country rock (Linda Ronstadt), and country pop (Carrie Underwood). While each of these subgenres has a distinct sound to separate them from one another, this sound usually comes from the instrumentation rather than a difference in vocal qualities.

When someone hears a country singer, the immediate indication of which genre is being sung is the country "twang." This is produced by widening and hardening the soft palate to make the vowels more spread, as well as focusing the sound to come more from the nose instead of the mouth. Country twang also refers to pronouncing the words with a southern accent. A great warmup for country singers to find their nasality or twang is "nyeah" with a very nasal and ugly tone. Sometimes, scrunching up your nose helps singers access this placement. The following songs should all include twang, as well as some other country vocal effects that I will discuss further in each description.

AGILITY

Agility 1: "How Do You Like Me Now" by Toby Keith and Chuck Cannon (1999)

Because Toby Keith is known for his wide range – especially his low notes – none of his songs need anything additional for them to be impressive. This is a good song for a beginning, male-identifying country singer who has lower notes in their range and not much agility training.

Agility 2: "Strawberry Wine" by Matraca Berg and Gary Harrison (1996)

This is an excellent piece to encourage agility because every time the singer, Deana Carter, sings the word "wine," there is a three-note run on "mi, re, do." This is also an excellent

[66] Egge, Dr. Sara. "The Origins of Country Music." Centre College's Norton Center for the Arts, February 23, 2022.

vowel to support a twangy and forward resonant sound. As stated in the warmups chapter (Chapter 3), most of the belting and mixing warmups encourage speech-like quality.

Country music requires the same approach, taken a step further. It may be easier for some to learn how to be more agile by practicing country riffs and runs so their tone is already forward and could move more quickly with more ease.

Agility 3: “Jesus Take the Wheel” by Brett James, Gordie Sampson, and Hillary Lindsey (2005)

Many songs sung by Carrie Underwood include some agility. This piece is from her album *Some Hearts* that was released in 2005. Not only are there many small riffs, such as the one below, but this song also gives a singer the opportunity to work on their yodel.

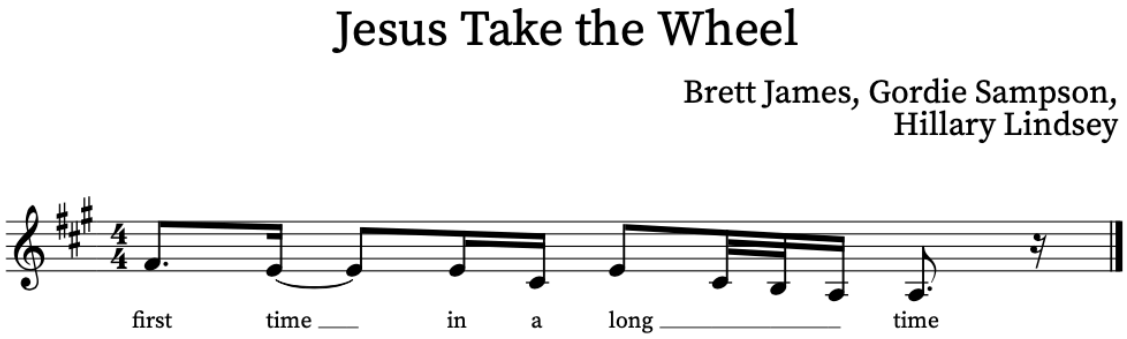

Figure 41. “Jesus Take the Wheel,” words and music by Brett James, Gordie Sampson, and Hillary Lindsey, transcription mine (New York: Sony/ATV Tunes LLC., Dimensional Music of 1091, Music of Windswept, 1609 Songs, No Such Music, Passing Stranger Music, and Raylene Music, 2005).

A yodel is when a singer dramatically flips between chest voice and head voice. Carrie produces this sound when she sings “wheel” in the passage below:

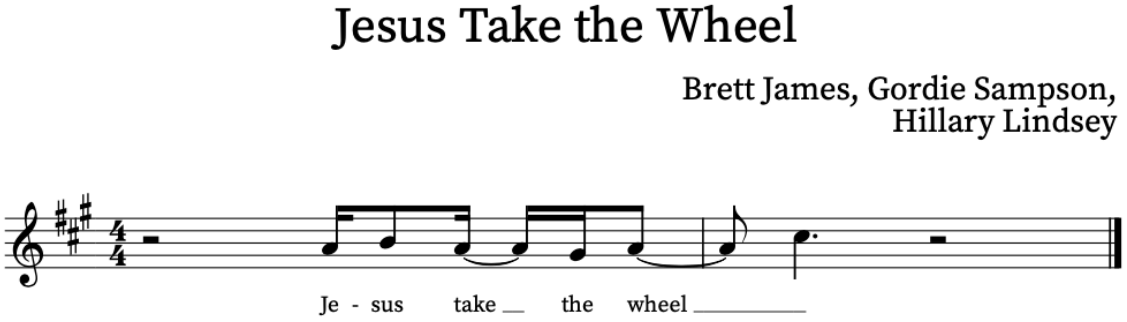

Figure 42. “Jesus Take the Wheel,” words and music by Brett James, Gordie Sampson, and Hillary Lindsey, transcription mine (New York: Sony/ATV Tunes LLC., et all, 2005).

A newer country singer can utilize this passage to work on flipping between registers to sound like a yodel, while keeping their sound forward with the country twang.

Agility 4: “What Hurts the Most” by Jeffrey Steele and Steve Robson (2003)

There are no riffs notated in the sheet music for this one, so it should receive both a high agility score and high improvisation score. Music by Rascal Flatts include many riffs and runs as that is part of their style. This band is also great to listen to when learning how to sing with a twang – out of all of the country singers on the country repertoire list, the voice of Gary LeVox, the lead singer of Rascal Flatts, sounds the most nasal and forward, in my opinion. There is a lot of space in this song for a singer to add riffs and runs. It is also a good song to work on other country effects such as breaks and cracks. Gary LeVox adds cracks every time he sings the word “hurts,” which is just one example of a place to include this effect.

Agility 5: “Tennessee Whiskey” by Dean Dillon and Linda Hargrove (1983)

Made popular by Chris Stapelton is this popular riff that many contemporary singers attempt:

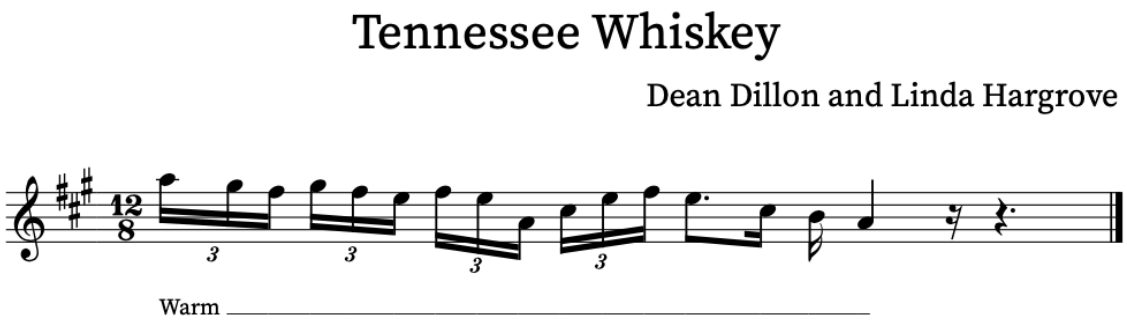

Figure 43. “Tennessee Whiskey,” words and music by Dean Dillon and Linda Hargrove, transcription mine (California: Universal – Songs of Polygram International, Inc. and EMI Algee Music Corporation, 1983).

This riff is not only difficult because there are so many notes on one syllable, but also because the notes change so fast. The first six pitches are more easily accessed because there are no jumps between them. I would isolate those first six pitches on “da,” then number the pitches based not on numbers on the scale, but numbers of pitches in the phrase (1, 2, 3, 2, 3, 4), then try it on a bright “ah” vowel, then attempt the word “warm.” I would then do the next six pitches in the same manner, slowing down the tempo until each note gets individualized attention and no pitches are slurring together. There are many more riffs in this song, notated in the sheet music.

IMPROVISATION

Improvisation 1: “What About Now” by Rob Harbin, Aaron Barker and Anthony L. Smith (1999)

This song was released by Lonestar in 1999 and was number 1 on the *Billboard US Hot Country Songs*, and also made it up to number 30 on the *Billboard Hot 100*. This song, although over twenty years old, would be considered country pop because of its position on both the country charts and Hot 100 chart. However, since it is older, the melody is important in this song and there is not much improvisation that is expected nor warranted to make this song better. Of course, all songs can be sung in one’s own fashion and made unique to the individual singer, but this song doesn’t require the singer to improvise. “What About Now” is a great song for newer country singers to sing because it’s fun, uptempo, and can be sung by any gender in any key.

Improvisation 2: “Gun Powder and Lead” by Miranda Lambert and Heather Little (2008)

Miranda Lambert has a beautiful country voice and produces dramatic twang with her pronunciation of every word. She is a great artist to listen to and gain inspiration because of her riffs, twang, and improvisation. Although there is not much improvisation Lambert does in this song, it’s still a good introductory song for when the melody doesn’t have many pitches, especially on the chorus, so the singer can experiment with varying the tune for their own artistry.

Improvisation 3: “I Hope” by Gabby Barrett and Charlie Puth (2019)

This song is a part of the country pop subgenre of country. It can be heard on country radio stations as well as popular music stations. There is also a duet version with Charlie Puth, a pop singer, which newer country pop singers can listen to for inspiration on how to create their voice to be a crossover-type sound between country and pop. It would also be interesting for a male-identifying singer to also sing this song, “gender-bending” it. The reason why this song deserves an Improvisation grade of a 3 is because the singer can take liberties with the melody on the verses especially, taking inspiration from both Barrett’s vocals and Puth’s vocals. Anything that is more on the pop-side of country can have more improvisation added to the melody line without taking away from the style of the song itself, unlike older country songs where it is more important to keep the melody just the way it is.

Improvisation 4: “Take Back Home Girl” by Hillary Lindsey, David Garcia, and Josh Miller (2017)

This is another Country Pop song, and neither of the two singers, Chris Lane nor Tori Kelly, have dramatic twangs in their voices. Lane is an actual country singer and Kelly just has more of a natural nasality in her tone so she can sing country with ease. When you listen to this song, you hear both Chris Lane and Tori Kelly adding improvisation, singing another vocal track simultaneously with the melody line, specifically at the end of the piece. This song is not only great for encouraging country pop singers to find their authentic tone, but also for riffs and runs and finding inspiration for improvisation at the end of the piece especially.

Improvisation 5: “My Wish” by Steve Robson and Jeffrey Steele (2005)

This is one of the most inspirational country songs that has ever been written, in my opinion. Any aspiring country singer of any age and gender identity can sing this song and relate to the words. When singers are dipping their toes into a new genre, it is important that they relate to the words so they can still be emotionally connected to the lyrics and meaning behind the song, and not get swept up in the technicality of producing a more foreign tone. This song is perfect for emotional connection.

There is so much room for vocal improvisation, and by simply listening to the original song, you hear Gary LeVox, the lead singer from Rascal Flatts who originally recorded this song, add many riffs and runs and “ooh’s” to this piece, especially at the end of the song. For example,

the short passage below is written with one pitch per word but when you listen to the recording, there is much more a singer can do with these two measures:

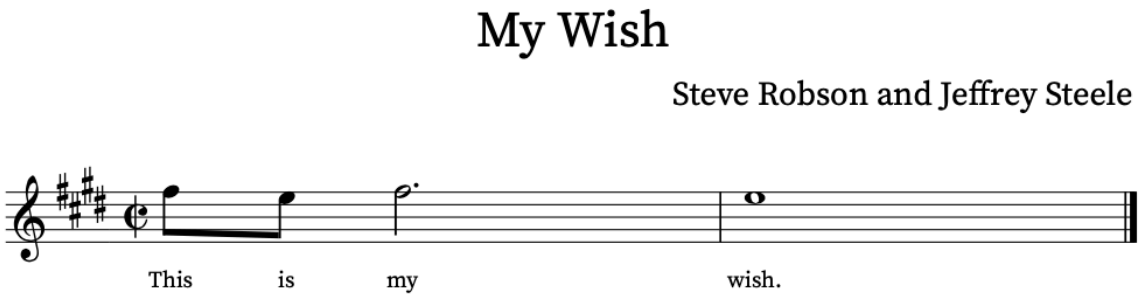

Figure 44. “My Wish,” words and music by Steve Robson and Jeffrey Steele, transcription mine (Tennessee: V2 Music Publishing Limited, Diver Dann Music, and Jeffrey Steele Music, 2005).

Singers can gain inspiration from the original or listen to many covers for more improvisation inspiration.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

There are an infinite number of musical genres, all requiring specific stylized approaches to make the music sound authentic. As a vocalist, it is important to learn how to use one's voice in many ways, showing diversity in vocal tone colors, vocal agility, practicing improvisation skills, and learning different techniques for modifying the voice in a way that emulates each style of music. In today's ever popular and growing field of Contemporary Commercial Music, it is important that schools of music and teachers of voice give their students permission to sing styles other than the traditional Western-classical canon.

By incorporating the warmups from Chapter 3 into one's "vocal diet," it will be more possible for those who are classically-trained to modify their sound to new styles, while maintaining their vocal health. If voice teachers wish to help students sing more healthfully in classical singing, surely, we must encourage efficient vocal techniques in other genres that are more popular today and that our students are already singing. The repertoire analyses beginning in Chapter 4 provide the basic groundwork for appropriate songs for diverse singers, depending on the singer's range, voice type, and agility and improvisation levels.

Although there are many more genres than the five discussed in this paper, musical theatre, pop, jazz, contemporary Christian/gospel, and country, analyzing the vocal style and colors used in performing these genres will provide a firm foundation for all singers to incorporate colorings and new techniques into other CCM genres. By understanding what effects each of the five genres requires for a singer to perform these styles, and realizing these effects can be created in healthy ways, singers will be set up for long-lasting success in whatever genres they choose. Vocal agility and improvisation are key in creating authenticity in many genres but realizing there are levels of need for these two effects based on the genre is important as well.

Understanding that the voice is a diverse mechanism that is capable of creating healthy singing in more than one genre is the first step many of us should take with our own voices or our students' voices, so that we may be current with the times and provide longevity in singers we hear on the radio and on Broadway.

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