Syllabus and Course Outline for Applied Lessons from the Studio of Jennie Such

last revised Aug. 2016

Contact Information:
Studio: MB 35 (basement level of the middle block in the new building)
Telephone: 647 881 5145 (cell or text)
Email address: jsuch2@uwo.ca

*Please give me your contact information at our first lesson

Lesson Essentials:
- two repertoire binders – one for me and one for you - organized by language
- studio syllabus and course outline (to be included in your binder of music)
- goal sheets
- 3 copies of repertoire (one for me, you and your pianist)
- recording device
- comfortable footwear and clothing (I have a very kinesthetic approach to teaching. Wear clothing that easily allows for movement).

Reading List:
Learning is facilitated by the teacher, but it is the job of the student. It is important to develop your own library and glean information from many different sources, and to remain open and curious about all aspects of singing. The following are books which specialize in the various facets of being an excellent singer.

On Acting:
On Singing:


On Choosing Repertoire:


On Art Song:


On Performance Anxiety:

STUDIO POLICY

Punctuality:

Please do not waste our time by being late. Arriving to a lesson late and unprepared is inconsiderate. Arrive early and warmed up so that you can get the most out of your lesson.

Lesson Length:

The “hour” lesson to which students are entitled is in fact 50 minutes in length. This is necessary for travel between classes. If your lesson is divided into two parts over two days each half will be 25 minutes in length.

Rescheduling:

Rescheduling lessons due to illness etc. is not possible except in exceptional circumstances. PLEASE NOTE: Any lessons missed due to my absence will be made up.

*My away dates for the fall term (2016): Oct.18th – 21st, 25th and 27th, and Nov. 30th – Dec. 5th. If you have a lesson(s) that fall within these time frames I will make them up at a mutually convenient time.

Cancellations:

Everyone gets sick. If you feel “under the weather” and need to cancel, please let me know 24 hours in advance. If you fall ill the day of a lesson call/text my cell phone number (647 881 5145). Please be considerate of your fellow students. If you are ill call in sick and get well soon!

*Be aware that missed lessons without 24 hours notice will not be rescheduled. I will only make exceptions with school-related conflicts or sudden illnesses if it can be accommodated in my schedule.

Finding a Collaborative Pianist:
Eric Charbonneau and Samantha Lee will be our studio pianists this year and will be available to work with you at your own personal coaching sessions during the week. I recommend at least one hour of coaching outside of your regular lesson time.

Lessons will be split into two 25 minute lessons per week. One focusing on technique, and one focusing on repertoire. You are required to bring your pianist to the repertoire lesson. A pianist is not required for the technical lesson.

Consistency is important, therefore your pianist will accompany you at all performance classes, lessons, recitals and juries. Please bring the same professionalism to your coachings as you do to your lessons ie) be punctual, prepared, polite and pay them promptly.

All financial arrangements are between you and your collaborative pianist. Please remember that unlike instrumentalists, we singers do not have to buy an instrument, so consider your coaching fees to be an essential part of your school expenses (just like books or school supplies).

Contact information:

Eric Charbonneau: echarbo4@alumni.uwo.ca
Samantha Lee: leesamantha@live.com

Recording Device:

I recommend that you bring a recording device to all lessons. This is essential to your learning process. Please consider a recording device a necessary expense. You need to be able to study your lesson recordings in order to improve.

Repertoire: YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHOOSING YOUR OWN REPERTOIRE.

*Be sure to read the repertoire list requirements below which vary depending on your year and degree. Your choices must include songs in English, French, German and Italian and cover various styles and time periods. Please note the post 1960 Canadian composition requirement.

This may take some research in the library and listening to recordings. Please feel free to consult me for advice regarding repertoire choices. We will work together on decisions regarding jury/recital programmes.

Repertoire Lists:
Creating and updating repertoire lists is a valuable skill to learn. Due dates for Repertoire Lists are as follows:

First Semester Repertoire List due by September 30th
Second Semester Repertoire List, and recital/jury repertoire list due by October 31st

*Please aim to have jury and recital programmes memorized by the end of February.

Minimum Repertoire Expectations:

**First Year Undergraduates:**

16 songs fully prepared and memorized (*must include one post 1960 Canadian composition)

**Performance Programme:**

Second Year: 22 songs
Third Year: short recital + 10 songs and/or arias (*must include one post 1960 Canadian composition). There will be an Oratorio jury in December.
Fourth Year: full recital + 12 songs and/or arias (*must include one post 1960 Canadian composition). There will be an Opera/Art Song jury in December (*note that in the 4th year jury requirement an oratorio aria can replace an opera aria)

**Non Performance Programmes:**

Second Year: 18 songs fully prepared and memorized (*must include one post 1960 Canadian composition)
Third Year: 20 songs (*must include one post 1960 Canadian composition)
Fourth Year: 20 songs (*must include one post 1960 Canadian composition)

Please take note of the Guidelines for Jurors Marking Undergraduate Voice Recitals and Jury Examinations page. This marking rubric is given to faculty members and delineates the criteria needed for a particular mark.
Important Reading Material:

Voice/Jury Recital Requirements


Department of Performance Studies Handbook


Goals for Applied Voice Lessons:

My goal as a teacher is “to inspire”. What are your goals? Here are a few to think about.

T – Technique – establish a solid vocal technique

O – Open to new ideas – take risks! Be open to new ideas about singing and how to improve

I – Independent thinker - become an independent thinker and make exciting repertoire decisions, musical ideas and artistic choices

N – New ideas – keep a practice journal. Fill out your weekly Goal Sheets. Bring new ideas to lessons. The student/teacher relationship is a collaboration

S – Self knowledge – know yourself better as a person, as well as a musician. In order to sing “from the soul” you need to work on eliminating emotional and physical barriers.

P – Potential/Practice – in order to realize your full potential you need to practice.
I – Inquisitive minds – ask questions!

R – Repertoire – get to know as much repertoire as possible.

E – Exploration – explore different genres – baroque, classical, opera, operetta, oratorio, cabaret...be a versatile singer!

Goal Sheets:

You will be required to fill out a “goal sheet” every week. WRITING DOWN YOUR GOALS MAKES THINGS HAPPEN.

Short Term Goals – these constitute a practice chart documenting your weekly practice routine in different areas. BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF! This is an important exercise in keeping track of your own progress and highlighting areas that need more work. Write down in the provided space any breakthrough moments you experience in the practice room, technical improvements you notice from week to week (ie: increasing range, breath support, tone quality).

Long Term Goals – Write down your long term goals at the beginning of the Term and then revise them at the end of the Fall Semester and again at the end of the year.

Long Term Goals may be about your jury preparation, upcoming auditions, technical goals you may have regarding your singing progress, repertoire you aspire to sing, roles you would like to perform, your plan after you graduate etc.

Tips for Setting Long Term Goals:

- read biographies of singers you admire
- listen to “up and coming” young artists. It is important to have a realistic idea of what the professional standard is, and strive to reach that standard.
- seek out masterclasses as an auditor or participant.
- use the internet as a resource to find out what opera companies and orchestras are programming.
Auditioning is a skill that has to be practiced. Take every audition opportunity possible. Think of each audition as a learning opportunity to get to know how your body reacts under pressure.

An Example of a Goal Sheet

- a MINIMUM of 7 hours a week practice
- a MINIMUM of 1 hour a week rehearsal with your pianist
- ALWAYS warm up before a practice session or lesson
- LISTEN to recordings of lessons

**Practice Chart**: (record time spent)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Vocalizing</th>
<th>Memory Work</th>
<th>Diction Work</th>
<th>Notes/Rhythms</th>
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**Short Term Goals:**
**Long Term Goals:**

**Performance Class:**

Date: Mondays (Starting September 12th)
Location: TC 101
Hours: 12:30-1:30

We will begin our first Performance Class with a "get to know you" sing through. Bring your favorite piece of music and everyone will sing at the first class. The first class will be on Monday, Sept. 12th.

I will work in a masterclass setting with two people per class. Those sessions will be 15 minutes in length, and will be more in-depth...like a public “mini lesson”. During this time constructive feedback will be invited from the listeners. The remaining 20 minutes of the class will be a sing through opportunity for approx. 4 additional people. There will not be time for feedback from me or the audience for this portion of the class. The goal here is to give as many people as possible an opportunity to perform. I will post a list on the studio bulletin board listing the masterclass dates, and who will be scheduled to sing. “Sing through” people can sign up on a first come, first serve basis. Everyone should aim to sing in performance class at least once every two weeks.

Music must be memorized and translated for your performance.

An introduction and short description of the story/translation of the poem must be presented.

*Your introduction is the audience’s first impression of you.* Please think this through and deliver it with the same polish and preparation as your sung text.

If you are performing for the class, please dress appropriately.

*Your attendance is mandatory for the full 50 minute performance class whether you are performing or not.*
Class Recitals:

Our studio will present two public recitals in November and January (dates TBA).

Recital #1

Our first recital will focus on the subject of Displaced People (refugees; the idea of being far from home; having empathy and a sense of hope for the future). A very relevant subject for the age in which we are living. It will be interesting work looking for music fitting this theme. Please stick to repertoire from the classical genre. A special thank you to Natalie Fasheh for the idea for the theme of this recital!

Recital #2

Our second recital will be called “Second Circle”. This idea of acting/singing in “second circle” or in a state of vulnerability and communication with the audience, is very relevant to singers, and is one that we will explore in this recital. Repertoire may be from any genre (art song/opera/musical theatre). The only criteria is that you connect with the text and perform in “second circle”.

MPS Recital Card and Reviews:

Recital Cards:

Music students are required to attend 12 concerts throughout the year. You must have a faculty member sign your recital card at each concert. If you attend a concert outside of Western a programme or ticket stub will suffice as proof of attendance.
The concerts should feature the voice (oratorios, operas, orchestral works with vocal soloists, song recitals, chamber music recitals which include singers). Choral concerts may be included if they feature soloists.

Reviews:

A written “review” of 250 words must be written for 6 concerts throughout the year. Some elements to comment on might include: thoughts on repertoire choices, balance between instruments and voice, qualities about the performance you admired, aspects that could be improved.

Grading:

MPS Handbook outlines grading percentages

- see website:


Key Elements of your Grade:

- technical improvement
- repertoire preparation (knowledge of text, memorization, artistic nuance)
- attendance/participation (lessons, performance class, concerts)
- attitude (positive, motivated, good work ethic/practice habits, open to new ideas)

Applied Music Grade Breakdown:

45% studio work
5% concert cards and reviews
40% jury
10% performance class and class recital participation

Guest Artists

Janine Pearson, Head of Coaching, The Stratford Festival

We are fortunate to have Janine Pearson returning again to work with our studio this year. She will lead a Performance Class in which all students in our studio will be involved. She will also be available for private coaching during one repertoire
lesson. Take advantage of her vast experience and knowledge about the voice, the body and expressing text with freedom. More information on her lesson fee and Performance Class date to come.

**Babette Lightner returns to the DWFOM this September**

Babette Lightner worked with our studio last year and her unique ideas about movement and expression meld physical and musical concepts in an interesting and enlightening way. We have been invited to partner Jen Moir’s studio in this work with Babette. More information on dates and fees to come.

I look forward to a year of exploration, music making and growth. It is my great pleasure to work with you all as we embark on this exciting journey together!

Sincerely yours,