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A U S T R A L I A

Investigating participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons:
A collective case study

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<u>Abstract</u>

This project illuminates participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons. The purpose was to explore with tertiary classical singing teachers and students their values and beliefs about singing teaching and learning and to explore their pedagogical practices, in order to generate new insights for those who work in the field. Values and beliefs of tertiary classical singing teachers are rarely scrutinized and there is little research that documents in situ pedagogical practices or interpersonal interactions between teacher and student. This study addresses the gap in the research literature.

The project employed a qualitative collective case study through the theoretical lens of cultural psychology, within a constructivist paradigm. Participants included a purposeful selection of three eminent tertiary singing teachers at separate Australian institutions and a current singing student. Each case comprised one teacher and student dyad. There were three cases in all.

The first phase generated data through semi-structured interviews, filmed singing lessons and examination of other artefacts. Initial interviews explored participants' life experiences of singing and values and beliefs about singing teaching and learning. The teaching and learning practices and interpersonal interactions of each dyad were then filmed in a semester-long singing lesson series. One year later video-prompted second interviews interrogated interpretations of the learning and teaching events and explored current developments of each participant.

The second phase was the analysis. Using narrative inquiry methods to analyse the filmed singing lessons, excerpts of certain learning and teaching events and interpersonal interactions were then transcribed. Using narrative inquiry methods, the video data, interview data and other artefacts were then analysed in three narrative accounts. Findings were verified through repeated member checks of the video data and narrative accounts. The discussion chapter then analysed each case using case study methods, based on cultural psychology theories and the substantive theory. Three characteristics emerged: pedagogy, environment, and relationship. From these characteristics five themes common across all cases were discussed: identity, dispositions and attributes, pedagogy, relationality, and community.

Broad findings indicate values and beliefs of the three singing teachers were informed by their experiences in singing performance, learning singing and the

culture of classical singing training, within both their institution and the wider culture of classical singing. Each teacher believed that a real, or natural voice was important but that a solid technical foundation was imperative to maintain a classical singing career. They showed extensive knowledge and understanding of current research in voice science, but were also knowledgeable about historical practices.

The teacher values, beliefs and practices that supported student learning included: use of pedagogy uniquely shaped for the student, empathetic trust and care, mentorship, and networking beyond the confines of the music institution. Each teacher wished to provide their students with the necessary craft skills, dispositions and attributes to pursue a professional career. Each teacher framed their teaching and learning practices through an ethic of responsibility and care but believed the student needed to be respectful and take responsibility for their learning.

The three students were encouraged to be independent, autonomous learners. They described their teacher's experience, skills and knowledge as being integral to their vocal development and described the importance of their teacher's care and emotional support. Students revealed a common desire to succeed in their lessons and to please their teachers, however the two students who set specific goals and adopted a classical singer identity appeared to achieve greater mastery over their instrument than the student who did not. Students believed they were their instrument and that identifying as a singer was fundamental to their sense of self.

Clear communication between teachers and students appeared to be vital for student self-efficacy. In two cases, students' intrinsic motivation and capacity for self-directed practice appeared to be positive attributes for effective learning. Teachers and students seemed to work best when personalities were aligned, a common pedagogical language was shared, and when respect, care and trust were evident between them.

An emergent finding was the tacit role of institutional values and structures in shaping the participants' teaching and learning practices. While a master / apprentice approach was evident within the one-to-one lesson, two teachers and their students functioned well within a supportive music institution while one dyad struggled to function within their institutional setting.

Implications for future research include investigating the transition of classical singing students from graduation to career. Another research strand is to explore gender issues in the one-to-one tertiary music lesson. Further research of Australian tertiary music teachers across a range of musical genres may ascertain the level of

institutional and personal support for professional development in pedagogy. A comparative study of the values and practices of tertiary music institutions in different countries is now recommended to ascertain their impact on student training. Finally, research is recommended to ascertain how the values and practices of tertiary music institutions support teachers and their pedagogical approaches to enhance student learning.

<u>Declaration by author</u>

This thesis **is composed of my original work, and contains** no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my research higher degree candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted **to qualify for the award of any** other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

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Publications during candidature

Journal articles and book chapters

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Contributor	Statement of contribution
O'Bryan, J.	Wrote the paper (100%)

Small excerpts of this publication were incorporated in Chapter Two under sub-sections Cultural psychology and the formation of identity, and Singing as self and self-identity. As per requirements in the UQ Authorship Policy (PPL 4.20.04 Authorship).

<u>Contributions by others to the thesis</u>

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Keywords

Singing, teaching and learning, classical singing, higher education, conservatoire, one-to-one music lessons, master / apprentice, cultural psychology in music.

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<u>Dedication</u>

To Scott.

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Prelude. Singing my story

In my family, singing is considered a normal, joyful activity. At seven years old I decided to become *a singer*, influenced by a popular, long-lasting TV program called Young Talent Time, a child singer called Tiny Tina Arena, and my dad's oft-played opera records. I knew I could sing. I was blessed with dad's Irish-heritage musicality, vocal quality and good aural sense, and the disconcerting volume of my mother's voice. Mum had insisted on immersive musical training for her five daughters and music making became one of my most enjoyable activities. I took piano, cello and group music lessons, played in community orchestras and sang in choirs, deeply engaged in each pursuit.

At age fifteen I took part in the annual school musical. I was awarded the lead romantic role of Babe in "The Pyjama Game" and was mildly accused of "cheating" during the auditions for having listened to my dad's record of the show and for being able to sight-sing. I didn't care because it wasn't cheating–I had *prepared*. After a few weeks in rehearsal I could recite all the parts from memory, sing all the songs and I knew now this artistic, musical life was the one I wanted. But I had no idea how to pursue it and nor did my parents, despite their substantial encouragement and support of my goals.

The following year I transferred to a school with a large performing arts program and commenced eagerly anticipated classical singing lessons–the only style then available. I recall feeling rather disappointed that I wasn't going to sing the musical theatre or jazz songs I loved but I didn't think to enquire about the limited offering. My first singing teacher was unfortunately in poor health. She seemed not at all interested in either teaching singing or me and was often absent. Amongst other techniques, I was taught to stand against the wall to ensure correct head alignment. I still possess the book of Twenty-four Italian Songs and Arias bought at the time and my teacher's handwritten phonetic translations of foreign language words remain clearly marked on the score. I loved singing the songs and easily obtained an A-grade in my final exam, blithely assuming I would do well.

My second singing teacher in my final year of secondary school was a world-renowned opera singer. I trusted her implicitly, but was terribly in awe of her and in many lessons I remember giggling nervously and uncontrollably throughout. Most of my two half-hour lessons per week were spent on exercises designed to improve breath control, flow, tongue position and vocal agility. I do not recall her talking very much and I believe much of the pedagogy was aural modelling. I transcribed many of her vocal exercises, and suspect much of her material was obtained from the well-known Marchesi vocalise manual, although my handwritten manuscript of those exercises was lost long ago. I studied no songs in these lessons. Despite this in my final singing recital I sang "Let the Bright Seraphim" by Handel and some Renaissance songs, receiving eighty-seven percent. Pleased as punch but determined not to show it, Dad asked me what had happened to the other thirteen percent!

I deeply valued the experience with this teacher. She belonged to the world of the master singing teacher and I respected her wisdom and standing in the operatic community. I felt by being in her presence some of her talent and knowledge might be passed onto me, and that by association I might become a better and more valuable singer. For ten subsequent years my singing lessons with her and other equally inspiring teachers became the only activity I truly looked forward to each week.

At age seventeen I now desperately wanted to be part of the operatic community my teacher wrote about in her autobiography, and I violently rejected all popular music forms except jazz and listened only to classical music. My aural models included Kathleen Battle, Kiri Te Kanawa, Maria Callas and Dame Joan Sutherland and I pored over a fancifully written biographical tome called "Queens of Song" by Gattey, dreaming of the day when I too would become part of that world, even though its stories were about consumptive, short-lived nineteenth century opera singers. A recently unearthed video made by the Sixty Minutes program in which I was one of the main interviewees reveals a self-conscious teenager with an unnerving directness of thought and, to my ears now, a rather humourless and obnoxious personality! My ambition to become an opera singer is clearly apparent and my singing voice, from what little I can hear on the recording, is typically young and unstructured.

I entered tertiary education and with my subsequent singing teachers I *assumed* what I was learning was correct and beneficial. I don't recall being asked how the sensation of singing felt and I do not recall being given any leeway with musical expressiveness at all. I did what I was told, as far as I was able and did not think to ask questions about my singing technique, although I recall feeling autonomous and independent in my learning. I almost invariably left my singing lessons on a cloud of happiness and accomplishment, and profoundly *trusted* my teachers. I had close mentor-mentee relationships with two of my teachers, even sharing the stage in a number of performances. One of my exam results from a difficult three-year period in the School of Music at the University of Tasmania states the "need to work on breath management and support", which I dismissed outright. I could sing long phrases. That's surely what they meant, as my understanding of support was non-existent and not clearly explained to me. How could I do that which was not prioritised in my lessons?

At twenty I learned difficult coloratura arias by Donizetti, Bellini and Verdi. I learned the Bell Song by Lakmé. I easily reached the high notes, but my voice quickly became tired and the songs did not sit comfortably in my voice. A review of a public recital I gave at age twenty-one nevertheless reports that I had a "well-developed upper register" and good musicianship. I won a number of Eisteddfodau, and a still working tape-recording of four

songs composed by a fellow student reveals a pretty voice with few audible technical faults and a clean, attractive tone, vastly improved from the recording of three years prior.

As for my tertiary experiences: due to difficult family circumstances I mostly stood apart from the student cohort and over time felt little connectedness either to the people or places of my tertiary education, bar my singing teachers. While I valued these institutions, I rarely gave much thought as to how they functioned, or how I was being shaped by their practices. Each seemed to function without much connection to other institutions or–to my mind–the wider musical world.

I preferred the university faculty of my alma mater The University of Melbourne to the other conservatoire models I attended, particularly my experiences at the Victorian College of the Arts, as the music faculty at Uni Melb seemed to value a broad academic education, despite a complete absence of staged performance opportunities such as operas or opera scenes. The other musical institutions I attended seemed instead to place excessive value on the performance qualities of the elite musician, which in hindsight was too narrow a focus for me, particularly when I knew instinctively that vocal facility takes longer to develop than other instrumentalists, given that the voice is being built throughout one's early adulthood. How could I compete?

I also did not consider how my teachers' approach may have been shaped or dictated by these institutions, and like any young, impetuous student, the world revolved around me and my concerns. I was smart, but not particularly perceptive. I did not feel part of a wider operatic community either, and any connection to the opera world was solely through my teachers. This proved disastrous for my sense of cultural identity and belonging over the next ten years.

By my mid-twenties, struggling through never-ending part-time undergraduate studies, I had no concept of voice physiology beyond rudimentary postural alignment and knew nothing of "support" or acoustic properties of the vocal tract. Nor did I seek to know. I did not know what Fach was, nor did I know what quality of voice I had. I did not have a sense of voice embodiment at all and lacked awareness of minute changes to the vocal mechanism. While my teachers identified my vocal faults, they were unable to provide long-term remedies or explain why they were using a particular technique for me, making it impossible for me to replicate a successful result at home.

I did not know what "line" meant. I did not know of any literature on the techniques of singing, nor did I seek any. The one thing I did know was the term "Bel Canto". Yet, I felt confident and superior in my singing ability, winning the prize in second year for the highest performance mark at the University of Melbourne, and many public competitions. I was gratefully awarded a number of university scholarships. A video recording made when I was twenty-three shows me singing Handel and Puccini with good postural alignment and easy sounding vocal technique. There is little evidence of technical flaws, but also little evidence of

characterisation or stagecraft. There is a complete disconnection from the dramatic implications of the libretto, because my teachers had never discussed this with me to any meaningful effect, nor did I get to perform in any operas or opera scenes bar my early experiences at the University of Tasmania. My success was a marker of my singing ability, but I was singing on capital. It began to show.

At age twenty-four my voice became affected by intractable tongue and jaw tension. My tone in the upper register from F5 became breathy and lacking in colour. In retrospect, I had poor breath support and my poor technique was exacerbated by chronic tonsillitis and stress from a difficult domestic situation. My teacher at the time could not repair these technical faults and I lost confidence in my singing ability. In an important concert I sang some self-selected Strauss Orchestral songs with the faculty orchestra, conducted by Georg Tintner, and I cracked my top note, a fairly easy A5.

In considerable distress, I abandoned my incomplete undergraduate studies, toured briefly as a jazz singer then commenced a highly regarded Conservatoire degree in Jazz studies, before dropping out of that to finally complete my classical music degree. My next singing teacher was initially supportive and helpful, but my top notes remained highly unstable and she could not help me access solid breath support. I still had horrible tongue and jaw tension. I was convinced my operatic voice was broken and I was grief-stricken and deeply embarrassed by my faulty technique, but I refused to discuss my failings with anyone, let alone my singing teacher. Grant (2009) writes of a similar situation in her health struggles, that the conservatoire environment "by its heavy silence implicitly propagated a sense of shame and dishonour around injury" (p. 124). I was silenced by failure, and like Grant, I began to withdraw rather than seek help. Simultaneously, the main professional opera company in my region folded, and there was no more employment available in opera unless one travelled interstate. It was a bleak time.

I ceased singing lessons after attaining my music degree as they were now beyond my means and I didn't know of anyone who could fix my voice, let alone heal my damaged singer's psyche. Schindler (2009, p. 188) writes that in singing there is an "inextricable link between technical proficiency and a balanced psychological and emotional operative state", which was true in my case. I was grieving for the loss of my voice and operatic career, which affected my physiological state. Yet, I didn't stop singing. I became a pop singer, trying to be a "muso" in the "real world". I learned how to belt and sing with twang to protect my voice from the heavy load of forty pop, folk, jazz and rock songs a night. I began to understand popular style and feel, stagecraft and "selling" the song. I learned to accompany myself on the piano and could write songs on the spot. Jazz improvisation was easy. At one gig a patron, complimenting me, said I sounded like Olivia Newton-John. But singing previously

rejected pop styles in a karaoke-type band was utterly soul-destroying, especially when sung night after night to an otherwise indifferent audience.

I felt no more a member of this contemporary commercial music scene than I had of the operatic community. My skills in sight singing and cello playing, classical music theory and vocal training were no good to me here. They were even maligned by some of the musos I played with because those skills were not needed. I was an imposter in the field, because I did not have an authentic connection to contemporary pop music and did not particularly enjoy singing it, bar my cherished Celtic folk and jazz styles. With the change in music and circumstance, my singer self-concept had to change and as Hargreaves, Miell and MacDonald note, "the psychological distress experienced by such discrepancies is often felt in terms of lowered self-esteem" (2002, p. 8). My musical identity, sense of self and self-efficacy were in complete disarray. Nevertheless, the work legitimised my overall singer identity: I was still *a singer*. I held tightly to that belief, determined to maintain my lifelong narrative sense of self (Bruner, 1996).

At the same time I taught singing in schools and at age thirty-one I qualified with a graduate diploma of education in classroom and instrumental music. I became a teacher. While I felt confident and competent in my teaching ability, I taught as I had been taught; an amalgamation of ten years of one-to-one singing lessons and a few observations of other teachers' singing lessons. I used imitative and aural modelling. I stood my students against a wall to correct postural alignment and I simply *did not recognise* tongue and jaw tension. I gave some hopelessly confusing information about trampolines to explain breath support and frequently placed pencil cases on the bellies of my supine students. As long as diction was clear, breath marks were in the correct place, and style, pitch and rhythm were accurate, I felt I was serving my students to the best of my–and their–ability. I was not really thinking any more reflexively about my pedagogical approach than I had about my singing.

Gradually I sensed my pedagogical knowledge was limited. My teenage students wanted popular songs, jazz, and music theatre, not classical music. Despite my extensive experience in performing across a range of popular styles I had no supporting pedagogy. Neither had my classical singing training prepared me for these genres. So, at age thirty-five I became involved in the peak body for singing teaching and undertook a Master of Music investigating singing pedagogy and practice. I read about human physiology, began to sing classical music again and really listened to my singing voice. I became more kinaesthetically responsive to changes in the vocal tract and learned to better manage my breath support. With the help of my final teacher, my classical singing voice was completely restored, stronger and more powerful than ever. Now I reflected on how I had learnt, and how my singing teachers had taught me. My teaching approach as a result became more inquiring and

more reflexive and as I became more knowledgeable about vocal physiology and pedagogical approaches my own students, excitingly, began to show marked improvement.

Despite my growing self-awareness I never realised I held implicit values and beliefs about classical singing teaching and learning. That is, until in 2008 I overheard a colleague say, rather complacently, "of course the one-to-one lesson is the most valuable mode of singing teaching–we all know that!" My interest was piqued, as I was not certain my one-to-one lessons had been altogether beneficial. I had had a private lesson with a well-known New York-based singing teacher a few months earlier. He had openly abused my vocal technique and crudely attacked my psyche, claiming I did not "embody" my voice and that I was not "grounded in my body". Given I was being attacked on a profoundly personal level by a virtual stranger, I am not surprised I was not grounded! Appalled, I had fled the room, silenced by fear and feeling emotionally violated. This was not the singing lesson I had wanted or expected. So my singing colleague's off-the-cuff comment became my "Eureka" moment and led me to this study.

While I had trusted and respected my singing teachers and believed our lessons together were essential to my singing development, I had not learnt vocal techniques to support me when I ran into difficulty. I wanted to explore my singing lesson experiences, to explore why I had suppressed my tendency to challenge authority and why I had failed to discuss with my teachers their values and beliefs and pedagogical practices. I wanted, too, to explore the cultural traditions of the conservatoire and the implicit values and beliefs held in these places of learning.

Through undertaking this study I felt I could learn more about the current practices of teachers and students in the one-to-one tertiary classical singing studio. I wanted to know what teachers and students value and believe about classical singing and how they perceive their singer identity. I wanted to know more about the tacit, implicit and taken-for-grantedness of classical singing education and culture, and to explore how classical singers are equipped for a career in classical singing.

Chapter One. Introduction

This study seeks to illuminate singing teacher and student values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons. The purpose of this qualitative collective case study is to explore with singing teachers and students their values and beliefs about classical singing teaching and learning in the conservatoire, and to explore the pedagogical practices of teachers engaged in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons, in order to generate new insights and inform those who work in this field. The research employed qualitative collective case study approaches to interrogate the phenomenon. Participants of this two-phase study included a purposefully selected group of three tertiary singing teachers and one of their current singing students at three Australian tertiary music institutions. Each teacher and student dyad formed one case. There were three cases in total.

This chapter begins with an overview of the context and background that frames the study. Following this is the problem statement, statement of purpose and research questions. Included in the chapter are a brief discussion of the research approach and the significance of the study. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the structure of the dissertation and definitions of some key terminology used.

Teaching and learning classical singing: an overview

The one-to-one tertiary classical singing lesson might be defined at its most basic as the transmission of singing skills from an experienced singer and teacher to a student in order that the student develops those same skills. The building of the voice and other knowledge required by the student includes musicianship, musical expressiveness, history and literature of the repertoire, languages, stagecraft, plus enculturation into a way of thinking and doing that dates back centuries. The relationship that evolves between teacher and student is a crucial aspect of the one-to-one singing lesson that supports and frames this skill-building process.

These lessons typically take place within a conservatoire environment, in a performance tradition spanning several hundreds of years, through a similarly ancient learning and teaching tradition. The values and beliefs of singers and singing teachers are commonly formed through life experiences and inculcation or membership into a particular culture–in this instance, the culture of the conservatoire and the wider culture of the classical singing community, which includes opera, those on the concert platform and other musical avenues. The relationships between teacher, student and the environment mutually constitute:
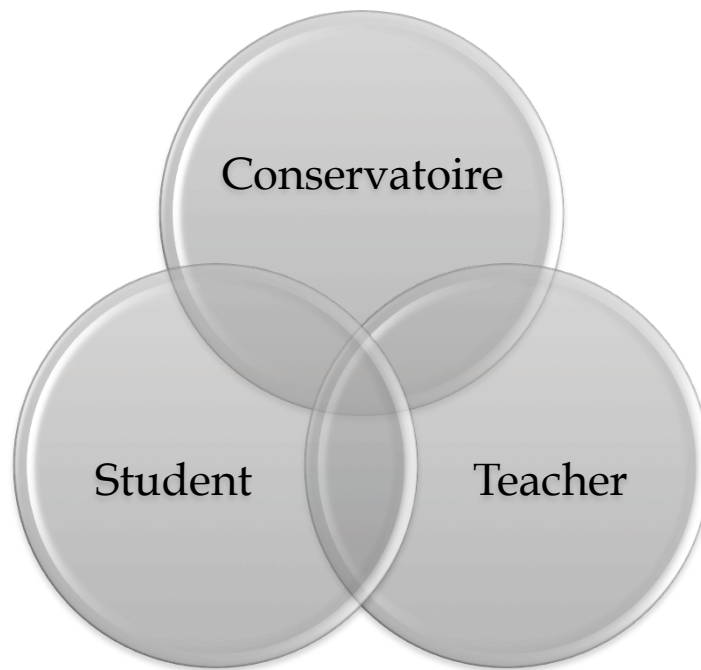
Figure 1: Connections between student and teacher and the culture of the conservatoire

Bruner writes it is through the interaction of learner and teacher that a shared culture of learning emerges, one that involves tacit understandings, and is enculturated; this is the "interactional tenet" where "it is principally through interacting with others that children find out what the culture is about and how it conceives of the world… Telling and showing are as humanly universal as speaking" (Bruner, 1986. p. 20). Rogoff (1995) refers to this as membership or shared participation in a culture–an apprenticeship of belonging. She claims that "the apprenticeship metaphor has at times been used to focus on expert-novice dyads; however, apprenticeship involves more than dyads. Apprenticeship relates a small group in a community with specialization of roles oriented toward the accomplishment of goals that relate the group to others outside the group." (1995, p. 143). In the centre of this study is indeed the expert-novice dyad, however Rogoff appropriately widens the focus to include the communities in which participants are operating, and it is partly through this wider lens that this study is also focused.

Both singing teachers and students are interacting within a culture of learning and teaching called the conservatoire that in turn operates within a dominant ideology of music making with a chronology of some four hundred years. The impact of such a long-lived culture on both the singing teacher and student is potentially profound. One way to show the position of the student or teacher within the conservatoire and classical singing communities

is through the following diagram, drawn from Bronfenbrenner's 1979 Ecological Systems Theory model, explained further in the literature review and used as a visual cue throughout:

Participant

MICROSYSTEM: Singer and Teacher values and beliefs, experiences, school, home, work, peers; Singing culture within a Conservatorium

MESOSYSTEM: Individual Conservatorium culture overlapping with singing culture and other microsystems

EXOSYSTEM: Learning and teaching environments and the approaches influencing development of the singer

MACROSYSTEM: Dominant Classical singing culture ideologies within Western Art Music since approx 1600AD.

Figure 2: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model (1979)

This study is concerned with the teachers and students who work within these communities–what they value and believe are important attributes and dispositions for a singing career, what they value and believe about classical singing and the community in which they operate, and how these values and beliefs inform the pedagogical strategies in the lesson.

Problem Statement

Western Art one-to-one classical singing teaching has been enshrined as a particular learning and teaching tradition in both pre-tertiary and tertiary music education for hundreds of years. It is generally acknowledged as a rich and complex learning environment that encompasses a wide variety of learning dynamics, behaviours and outcomes (Davidson & Jordan, 2007). The practices of one-to-one classical singing lessons are under-reported in the research (Kennell, 2002; Burwell, 2003; Burwell, Young and Pickup, 2004; Zhukov, 2004; Parkes, 2009; Harrison, 2010; Burwell & Shipton, 2011; Carey & Grant, 2014). One-to-one music lessons generally favour a secretive learning and teaching approach (Davidson and Jordan, 2007), due to the confidential nature of the dyadic relationship and the ancient cultural traditions of the master/apprentice approach that actively discourage open discourse (Sennett, 2008; Polanyi, 1958). Therefore research of one-to-one singing instruction is rare,

with researchers acknowledging the difficulty of examining what is in essence a private transaction between teacher and pupil. Third party observation in such a dynamic setting can upset the factors that make the teacher-student dyad so potent, which has created difficulties for researchers in the interrogation of these learning and teaching relationships.

Personal accounts of singing and teaching experience tend to dominate the singing pedagogy literature (Welch et al, 2005; Miller, 1996; Callaghan, 1998). While the extensive available scientific research of voice physiology is of great value to the singing teaching community, there is relatively little research that investigates values and beliefs about classical singing pedagogy within the conservatoire. Arguably, classical singing teachers rarely consciously consider how cultural traditions or their own experiences may inform their own values and beliefs about classical singing teaching, and how they may, in turn, be shaping the values and beliefs of their students (Miller, 1996). It is how these values and beliefs inform the practices of tertiary classical singing teaching and learning that this study aims to investigate.

The cost of providing one-to-one tertiary music lessons is high. The pay of personnel for these lessons constitutes much of the cost of running a conservatoire. In response to ongoing financial cuts to the sector, various conservatoires within Australia in the last five years have either marginalised the worth of one-to-one music lessons through rhetoric and reframing of their place in the conservatoire, or diminished them in both length and number across the duration of the degree, such as at the Conservatoriums Elder (in South Australia), Newcastle (in New South Wales) and Queensland. Universities and conservatoires struggle to rein in burgeoning expenditure while simultaneously the Australian Government in 2014 recently proposed legislation to reduce funding from 2016 by AU$3000 per student per year. AU$3000 represents, at today's casual pay rate for one-to-one music teachers of AU$120.00 per hour (QCGU, 2014), twenty-five hours of music lessons over the course of a year. Investigation of one-to-one music lessons and discussion of their value and worth to the music community is therefore imperative if conservatoires wish them to remain the "signature pedagogy" (Shulman, 2005) of elite musical training.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to illuminate the values and beliefs of those who are involved in tertiary classical singing lessons and to explore how values and beliefs inform their practices. It is anticipated that, through a better understanding of how cultural traditions of classical singing shape current practices of classical singing learning and teaching, singing teachers may be able to consider how their values and beliefs inform their own approaches to teaching and learning singing, and how this may impact on student outcomes.

To further define the purpose of the study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What are participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons?
2. How do participant values and beliefs inform their practices?

Research Approach

The project was devised as a two-phase collective case study, using qualitative research methods. Each teacher and student dyad formed one case. There were three cases in total.

Phase One comprised data generation with three eminent singing teachers and one each of their current undergraduate singing students. In-depth semi-structured individual interviews were held with each participant, before commencing filming a video-series of eight to ten singing lessons with each teacher and student dyad over the duration of one semester. Participants completed a brief email interview midway through the video series. A final video-prompted interview was held with each teacher and student to elicit further information about the videos and to generate further understandings about the processes taking place.

Other data generation events included email correspondence, tertiary institute website data plus incidental secondary data generation including concerts and other performance artefacts. The information obtained through these data generation events formed the basis for the overall findings of this study. All participants were identified by a pseudonym and all interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. To support the findings from the data, member checks of all major data events were incorporated into the study design.

Phase Two comprised three analysis stages over three years. The first comprised the video analysis, using a narrative inquiry analysis of critical events. Second, employing narrative inquiry methods, data events from each case were written into three narrative accounts through a naturalistic, inductive analysis process. This enabled insights and findings to be generated from the data in which critical events were explored and framed via a narrative, storied approach, and member-checked by participants prior to inclusion in the final draft. The narrative accounts were then analysed further in the discussion chapter using case study analysis through three major characteristics: pedagogy, environment, and relationship. From these three characteristics emerged five themes common across all three cases: identity, dispositions and attributes, pedagogy, relationality, and community. These were developed and refined on an ongoing basis, guided by the study's conceptual

framework. Various strategies to ensure credibility and dependability were employed including a range of data generation events, member checking, and peer review at different stages as the study progressed.

Rationale and Significance

The rationale for this study stemmed from a desire to illuminate tertiary classical singing training approaches, because the values and beliefs of those who are involved in tertiary classical singing lessons are rarely explored and almost never linked to their teaching and learning practices or to the cultural habits (Rogoff, 2003; Kingsbury, 1988; Perkins, 2012) of their institutions. It is anticipated that, through a better understanding of how cultural traditions of classical singing shape current practices of classical singing learning and teaching, singing teachers may be able to consider how their own values and beliefs inform their own approaches to teaching and learning singing, and how this may impact on student outcomes. Tertiary classical singing education also takes place in music schools and conservatoires that have their own cultural habits, although frequently research paints conservatoires as culturally homogenous. Conservatoire cultures are unique "silos" and the learning and teaching practices are peculiar to each institution, and based on the implicit values and beliefs that have formed throughout its lifetime. These institutions and their cultural habits are set within the intersecting cultures of musical education and the music professions in mostly European (classical) music. Therefore, singers' and teachers' lives are conducted within the cultural practices in which they operate, at every level.

The significance of this study stems from the pressing need to investigate one-to-one tertiary music lessons, due to ongoing discussions about their worth and relevance to musicians in the twenty-first century (Carey & Grant, 2014). Without investigation into how such lessons are constituted, conservatoires and music institutions are in danger of losing such modes of learning and teaching, based partly on the need to save costs and reduce substantial budget deficits, but also partly on the lack of understanding about what this approach provides musicians and the music community. The perceived value and worth of one-to-one music lessons must therefore be interrogated against this backdrop.

Increased understanding of the processes and practices of one-to-one tertiary classical singing teaching may inform stakeholders about what makes this learning and teaching approach unique, and clarify the historical significance of this approach and its application for the next century. In particular, the illumination of singing teacher and student values and beliefs about singing teaching and how the values and beliefs inform their pedagogical practices may help to educate tertiary classical singing teachers about how best to prepare their students for a career in classical singing.

Key Definitions

The term "culture" is to be read as the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/culture). In this study it is the classical music culture of Western Art music–specifically classical singing–within the Australian conservatoire environment, and the ideas, customs, social behaviours and learning and teaching traditions of those within its walls.

The term master/apprentice has two main constructs in this thesis. Firstly, it is explained within its historical context of the European medieval guilds, and is explored through its person-to-person learning and teaching interactions, particularly in music. Secondly, it is explored through Rogoff's theory of guided participation in a culture (1995), which in this case is within the conservatoire.

The term classical singer is taken to mean a singer trained in the Western Art tradition, which includes those preparing for a life on the concert platform, oratorio, the operatic stage and other avenues where classical singing is the predominant vocal art form. Throughout the dissertation the term classical singer may be employed as well as the terms singer or opera singer. In this dissertation there is not an exclusive emphasis on the development of the opera singer, given that the students in the study were still in training and their career paths were not yet formalised, although there is consistent reference to opera as the career medium to which the students aspire. The teachers in the study have all worked on a number of performance platforms including the concert platform and the operatic stage.

The term singing teacher may be used interchangeably with teacher and pedagogue. The term singing student may be used interchangeably with student and singer. In the Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems models the central term is 'participant': this applies to either the undergraduate student or the teacher. There is no distinction required between the two in these models.

The French spelling of conservatoire is the preferred terminology in this dissertation although it may be used interchangeably with the Australian preferred Latin-based term conservatorium. In this dissertation tertiary music institution, conservatory, music faculty and music school are also interchangeable terms for conservatoire.

The common term 'voice science' may be used interchangeably with another common term: 'voice research'. Each of these terms signifies the vast array of scientific, acoustic and biological research undertaken of the human larynx, mechanisms of breath and breathing, neuroscience and how the human voice functions both in speech and in song. It includes physics of sound and airflow, diseases of the larynx and many other areas of scientific endeavour.

Shape Of The Dissertation

In Chapter Two the literature review examines classical singing through its various learning and teaching traditions over its lifespan. It explores cultural psychology and how individual and cultural processes mutually constitute, and how classical singers develop their values and beliefs, dispositions and attributes. The literature on singing pedagogy, pedagogical approaches in one-to-one music training and the learning and teaching relationship are investigated. The review then explores the history of the conservatoire and master apprentice approach in singing training, and explores the current trends in the provision of one-to-one lessons in Australia.

Chapter Three explains the methodology employed in the study and how various qualitative research approaches were utilised through a social constructivist lens, including case study and framing of the case study data through three narrative accounts and a discussion chapter. It concludes with a brief introduction to each of the narrative accounts.

Chapters Four, Five and Six present the findings of each of the cases through three narrative accounts. The discussion in Chapter Seven further illuminates the findings from each of the cases and links them to relevant theory.

Finally, Chapter Eight concludes the study and suggests how the master/apprentice approach and one-to-one music lessons within the conservatoire might be reframed and reconsidered for the twenty-first century.

Chapter Two. Literature Review

This study investigates classical tertiary singing teaching and learning approaches by examining the values, beliefs and practices of tertiary classical singing teachers and their students. Employing theories of apprenticeship within the larger theoretical lens of cultural psychology, this review investigates the classical singing lesson, its history and culture, and the implications for classical singing training in the twenty-first century through two research questions:

1. What are participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons?
2. How do participant values and beliefs inform their practices?

This chapter commences with an explanation of teaching and learning classical singing and the main areas selected for the literature review. This is followed by an explanation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) that shapes the review. Following this is an overview of cultural psychology, its history and how it shapes the dynamic, interdependent psychological processes of teaching and learning classical singing. The connection of singing teaching and learning to cultural psychological theories is then further articulated through a discussion of the formation of singer identity, values and beliefs, attributes and dispositions and tacit knowledge of the classical singer and teacher. With the emphasis on people working together on developing skills, literature on relationality and rapport in the tertiary one-to-one music lesson and the communities and cultures in which the singer develops their cultural identity is appraised.

Research into pedagogical practices of one-to-one general musical training is then outlined, as is literature on past and present pedagogical practices in one-to-one singing lessons. The master-apprentice tradition in classical singing is investigated and its development in the conservatoire environment is explained. Then follows a brief review of current conservatoire practices, specifically investigating the current state of affairs in the provision of one-to-one music lessons in conservatoires and why investigation into one-to-one music lessons is crucial for understanding this learning and teaching approach.

Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided with an appraisal of the gaps in the literature.

An apprenticeship in singing

Learning to sing Western Art music requires the development of specific skills and content knowledge acquisition, and the adoption of attributes and dispositions fundamental and unique to the classical singer's profession (Blades-Zeller, 2003, Miller, 1996). These skills include the technical and physical development of the voice, which include acting, stagecraft, and the acquisition of languages, as well as musicianship (aural and theoretical musical concepts), history, and styles of singing, as seen in the Figure below. These skill sets have been enshrined in music education practices since the creation of opera in Italy at the beginning of the seventeenth century but were apparent before this time (Rosselli, 2000). Singers also bring to their learning their values and beliefs about singing, borne of their past experiences in singing and music making. In addition, a singer will develop an identity in music (McDonald, Miell & Hargreaves, 2002), in their voice and in their professional employment roles within the classical music industry.

Figure 3: Skills, content knowledge and dispositions required in classical singing

In the above diagram, I created four petals to represent the craft skills of classical singing, which include Vocal Technique, Kinaesthetic Awareness, Musical Expressiveness, and Characterisation and Stagecraft. Three petals then represent the content knowledge of singing, including approaches to music Languages, History and Styles, and Musicianship (aural and theoretical musical knowledge) while the remaining petals represent the Roles in the Community, Dispositions and Attributes, and Musical Identities of classical singers. Each

petal overlaps with the other petals in a dynamic, interconnected relationship. This review examines specifically how singer identity, dispositions and attributes are formed during their early learning experiences, their learning and teaching experiences in higher education and the community of the conservatoire, through an apprenticeship model of learning.

Singing teacher as master

In addition to developing their musician identity and performing career, singers may add the role of singing teacher. For some, teaching comes after the cessation of a successful performing career (Gaunt, 2008; Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Carey & Grant, 2014), while for others teaching as a supplemental income source is undertaken alongside performing, in a portfolio career (Bennett, 2008; Triantafyllaki, 2010). Other singers may be actively pursuing a career solely in teaching. For teachers, the acquisition of skills, content knowledge and dispositions may centre around development of a vocal pedagogy, the development of teaching attributes and the maintenance of singing skills and content knowledge as indicated in the following diagram (Chapman, 2006; Collyer, 2010).

Figure 4: Skills required in classical singing teaching

The schema created above represents some of the myriad skills required of a singing teacher that extend beyond mere voice building (Collyer, 2010; Triantafyllaki, 2010). The diagram cannot illustrate the full complexity and interconnectedness of the skills, content knowledge and attributes required in both learning to sing and teaching singing. Nevertheless, the dispositions and attributes of a teacher that have been formed partly through the values and beliefs they have developed throughout their careers and their lived

experiences as singers and musicians will influence the development of skills, content knowledge, dispositions and attributes of their students. Traditionally, music teachers are considered the experts and masters of their art. With their students they enter into a type of master/ apprentice arrangement that within the conservatoire culture prepares students for a career in the profession.

This review specifically examines the literature on singing teacher values and beliefs, dispositions and attributes. The history of pedagogical strategies employed in the classical singing lesson is investigated and research on current strategies is appraised. I also examine the learner-teacher relationship in the one-to-one singing lesson.

A useful way to *visualise* an individual's place within specific cultural settings and environments over time is through Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model (1979). To make sense of how current classical singing teaching and learning approaches developed, I employed the model to show the position of the individual in relation to the culture of classical singing. Following is a brief explanation of the model and its use in this review.

Culture of classical singing using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) attempted to show the relationships between environments and people through his ecological systems theory and by two main propositions of human development. Proposition one identifies a "complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects and symbols in its immediate environment" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 38). Proposition two states human development varies "systematically as a joint function of the characteristics of the developing person; of the environment…and the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration" (ibid.). While Bronfenbrenner's system emphasises studying the relations among the multiple settings in which participants are involved, and examining how transitions are made between different ecological settings, Rogoff suggests rather that "the separation into nested systems constrains ideas of the relations between individual and cultural processes" (2003, p. 48). In her opinion, the dynamism between these processes and how the individual may influence the ecological setting itself is rather more mutable.
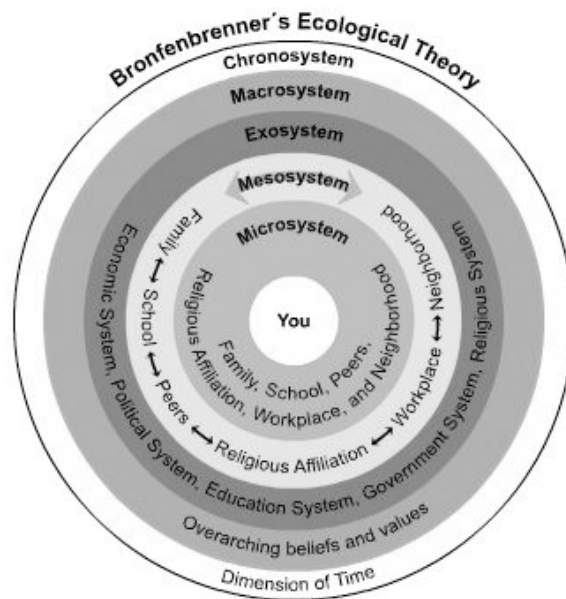
Figure 5: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model (1979). **Retrieved from:**
http://faculty.weber.edu/tlday/human.development/ecological.htm

At the centre of the model is the individual. Surrounding the individual is the
microsystem, which incorporates the immediate experiences of the individual, including home,
school and/or work, and interpersonal relationships with family and teachers and others
pertaining to that individual. Circling that are the *mesosystems*, which are systems of
microsystems – "the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings
containing the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 40). *Exosystems* are the linkages,
processes and events that indirectly influence processes within the immediate system in
which the developing person operates and *macrosystems* consist of a "societal blueprint for a
particular culture or sub-culture" (ibid.). Finally, Bronfenbrenner added a *chronosystem* that
encompasses change over the life course of an individual and the environment across
historical time.

Bronfenbrenner's nested system is a useful guide for determining how the culture of
opera and singing education have functioned over time and how they are situated in relation
to each other. The following figure provides an approximate schema of how individuals are
placed within the culture of opera, within the conservatoire, and within a learning and
teaching paradigm that arguably has not changed for hundreds of years (Madsen, in Parkes,
2009). What it does not show particularly well is how the learning and teaching paradigm of
the master-apprentice atelier emerging from the Middle Ages influenced the culture of opera
training, and how the cultural systems of classical music and opera training in turn
influenced later conservatoire education systems. As Rogoff (2003) notes, the interaction of
individuals and people in cultures impacts on these cultures and vice versa, creating a far
more dynamic system than can be indicated in two dimensions.

Participant

MICROSYSTEM: Singer and
Teacher values and beliefs,
experiences, school, home, work,
peers; Singing culture within a
Conservatorium

MESOSYSTEM: Individual
Conservatorium culture overlapping
with singing culture and other
microsystems

EXOSYSTEM: Learning and
teaching environments and the
approaches influencing development
of the singer

MACROSYSTEM: Dominant
Classical singing culture ideologies
within Western Art Music since
approx 1600AD.

Figure 6: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model (1979) applied to classical singing

In Figure 6 the dominant ideologies regarding classical Western Art singing from about 1600AD impacts the other systems at every level. In this review I firstly examine components of the smallest ring: the microsystems of the singer and teacher, their values and beliefs, and their experiences in music and singing. The model's different systems are then explored. To guide the reader each new section is prefaced by a visual representation of the model and highlighted to the relevant section.

To illuminate the interactions of teachers, students and the conservatoire and classical singing profession the theoretical framework is viewed through the lens of cultural psychology, which examines how human interactions are both formed by and forming the culture in which participants live and work. The following sections briefly examine cultural psychology and its history, and then link cultural psychology to formation of identity and learning and teaching relationships within the conservatoire. The sections correspond to the microsystem of the individual at the centre of the Bronfenbrenner model.

Cultural psychology

The field of cultural psychology developed as a way to understand mind in society. Heine claims that understanding the mind of a cultural species "requires a rich understanding of how the mind is constrained and afforded by cultural learning. The field of cultural psychology has emerged in response to this challenge" (Heine, 2010, p. 1423).

Informed by fields including philosophy, psychology, history, the human sciences, anthropology, sociology, linguistics and semiotics (Cole, 1996; Bruner, 1996; Rogoff, 2003; Markus & Hamedani, 2007), cultural psychology acknowledges that human endeavour is inextricably bound in cultural meanings (Heine, 2010).

In 1991 Cole believed cultural psychology would never be a discipline because his reading of its history suggested it would have to be "the metacategory for general psychology" (Cole, 1991, p. 439), however by 1996 Cole had altered his stance somewhat, titling his book Cultural Psychology: a once and future discipline, and claiming the approach to modern psychology is and always has been cultural.

In creating a contemporary definition of cultural psychology Markus and Hamedani, (2007, p. 3) state "people and their social worlds are inseparable: they require each other", while Kitayama, Duffy and Uchida (2007) note that "culture is both inside and outside the mind" (2007, p. 168). Rogoff concurs, stating "*people develop as participants in cultural communities. Their development can be understood only in light of the cultural practices and circumstances of their communities – which also change*" (her italics) (2003, p. 4).

History of cultural psychology

The development of the field of cultural psychology can be linked to a number of late nineteenth century theorists including Wundt (Cole, 1996), whose conception of psychology adopted two parts–the first being an experimental scientific approach to the physiological workings of mind, and the second being what German theorists called Völkerpsychologie, or the "second psychology", being "the study of higher psychological functions [that] requires the use of a developmental-historical methodology" (Cole, 1996, p 29). Wundt's theory that human development always functions within a socio/historical-cultural context was neglected by cognitive, behavioural and developmental psychology for many years, however Vygotsky (1978) also perceived human development within an historical-cultural context.

1990 marks the period when several seminal books and papers explained "how cultural experiences were central to and inextricably linked with psychological processing" (Heine, 2010, p. 1423), paving the way for empirical research demonstrating the impact of culture on many psychological phenomena and the re-emergence of Wundt's "second psychology" (Cole, 1996).

Cultural psychology is frequently mistaken for cross-cultural psychology, but Triandis (2007) argues the differences between the fields are small and one of emphasis rather than qualitative substance. He explains that cultural psychology is both inside and outside the person. Anthropologist Konner (2007, p. 99) argues that cultural psychology is rather late off the mark, claiming it

> represents the realization by psychologists of something that psychological
> anthropologists have known and investigated for a century: Culture has profound

influences on mind that go beyond habitual or customary behaviour, and mind in turn may help explain the uniqueness of cultures.

Nevertheless, he welcomes the development of cultural psychology, acknowledging that anthropology does not have the resources to do justice to these phenomena, nor does it utilise the kinds of research approaches used by psychologists.

Cultural psychology and the formation of identity

In cultural psychological terms, the development of an individual's identity is connected with their social identity, which "provides a link between the psychology of the individual–the representation of self–and the structure and process of social groups with which the self is embedded" (Brewer & Yuki, 2007, p. 307). Brewer and Gardner (1996) hypothesized that there are three different levels of the social self: the individual, the relational and the collective. In classical singing training within a conservatoire, the *individual* refers to the representation of self that is differentiated from other individuals, such as the soprano singer. The *relational self* is that defined by connections and role relationships with significant others, such as in learning and teaching roles. The *collective self* refers to "prototypical properties shared among members of a common ingroup" (Brewer & Yuki, 2007, p. 310), for example where classical singers in a conservatoire share common characteristics of that group. Stryker and Burke's work suggests also that identity forms "the meanings that persons attach to the multiple roles they typically play in highly differentiated contemporary societies" (Stryker and Burke, 2000, p. 284), suggesting that our social selves can exist across many ingroups and cultures and in many forms and roles.

Self-identity is not completely fixed. We may possess more than one identity, according to social constructivist theories (Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002), however, an ongoing personal narrative over time shapes one's core sense of self even if this changes in response to changes in personal identity, relational identities and collective identities. This narrative self is a key factor in human sense making, as Bruner writes: "we principally construct a version of ourselves in the world, and it is through its narrative that a culture provides models of identity and agency to its members" (Bruner, 1996, p. xiv). This construction of narrative identity becomes the way in which humans make sense and meaning of their lives. For developing singers it is particularly pertinent, given that they are their instrument and that their social, relational and collective selves will be shaped in part by how their voice develops and in what musical field. In Bronfenbrenner's model we can see how this section approximately corresponds to the microsystems of individuals:

Participant

MICROSYSTEM: Singer and
Teacher, values and beliefs,
experiences, school, home,
work, peers; singing culture
within a Conservatorium

MESOSYSTEM

EXOSYSTEM
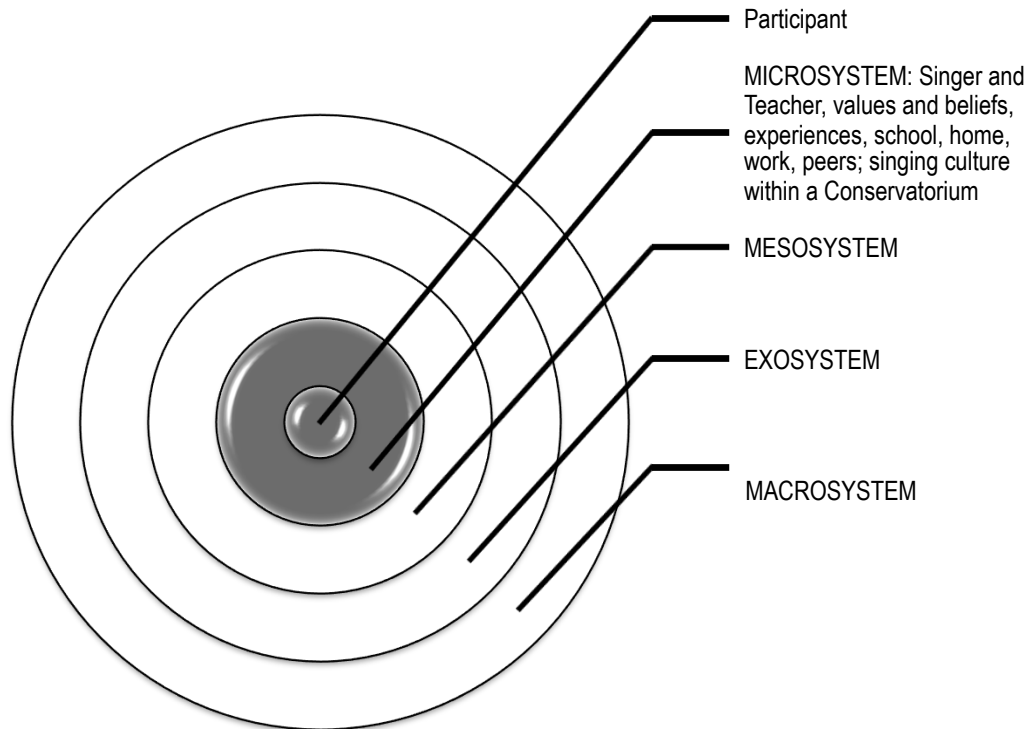
MACROSYSTEM

Figure 7: The Microsystem

Singing as self and self-identity

Musical identity is formed partly through musical experience, but also partly through situations and interactions with people in every day life (Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002). Also fundamental is the environment in which musical learning takes place, as Welch and Ockelford explain: "the process of individual induction into the characteristics of a particular musical culture by teachers and institutions influences the formation of identities in music" (2009, p. 318).

For singers there is an added complication: they are their instrument (Kokotsaki, Davidson & Coimbra, 2001; Chapman, 2006; Burwell, 2006; Callaghan, 2010; O'Bryan, in press). According to Thurman and Welch, "our voices are a primary means by which we communicate our needs, wants, thoughts, and feelings with others… self-expression with our voices is connected to the deepest, most profound sense of "who we are"" (2001, p. 175). A singer's sense of self may be intrinsically connected to their voice's expressive capacity and their own embodiment of sound as agent of selfhood (Hughes, 2013). Therefore, voice type (Fach) and music selection will also partly determine their social selves: their individual singer identity, their relational identity and their collective identity within the singing culture of which they are a member.

Voice classification and the associated repertoire, Callaghan claims, is "a subtle, complex matter" (2010, p. 21). Definition of voice types is crucial in operatic singing culture as it in part defines the repertoire, the operatic roles and even the approach to vocal technique

(Miller, 1996). Voice type becomes a facet of identity and position within the operatic world. If, as Callaghan writes, "singing is about the self"(2010, p. 28), and given that self-identities are dynamic and changing, particularly during learning and teaching processes and transitional phases (Ibarra, 1999; Creech et al, 2008), the singer's self-concept may be affected by the demands of a tertiary course during which the voice is being built, particularly as the mastery of their instrument is a key indicator of self-efficacy and competence.

For a young singer entering a conservatorium, mastery of their voice through vocal training and voice building may require reshaping their singer identity while they simultaneously navigate the challenges of study, young adulthood and university life. The singing teacher may be central to the successful navigation of the student's social self and belonging in their particular musical culture.

Perceptions of natural voice and innate talent

Crucial to a student's sense of self and self-efficacy is the notion of a "natural voice" (Blades-Zeller, 2003, p. 106) or "beautiful instrument" (p. 109). Singers tend to believe voices are born, not made, given that an individuals' voice is a unique result of that person's mostly internal physiological co-ordinations to make sound. Awareness of a natural voice or beautiful instrument, however, is partly dependent on the perception of the listener, which, as Welch writes, "is contextualised by the listener's age, family, community membership, enculturation and the development of the vocalizer" (2005, p. 239). Miller likewise claims a concept of beautiful voice or timbre is "the result of vocal conditioning"(1996, p. 205). He believes various techniques of singing can be identified to a certain extent according to cultural preferences. However, it is also dependent on the singer's ability to communicate what they interpret from the simultaneous acoustic feedback stream they receive, through "musical features, vocal quality, vocal 'accuracy', 'authenticity', emotional state, and personal identity" (Welch, 2005, p. 255).

It appears that vocal quality is most likely a combination of cultural conditioning and genetic inheritance, although as McPherson and Hallam (2009, p. 261) point out, "the extent to which genetic endowment underpins or limits all subsequent musical development has and continues to be fiercely debated". They suggest instead "what children are born with *enables* rather than *constrains* what they will eventually be able to achieve" (ibid.).

The concept of natural voice in a singer is at odds with Ericsson's notion of expertise derived from "deliberate practice" (2004) of ten thousand or more hours. Moreover, McPherson and Hallam questioned this "monotonic" (2009, p. 257) relationship as in several music studies no relationship was found between total practice time and performance achievement. For singers, too, there appears little correlation between time spent singing and vocal quality, because the physical fragility of the immature voice cannot withstand the hours of training young musicians appear to require to achieve expertise. Instead, young singers may be involved in musically enriched social activities throughout childhood that enhance

their genetic inheritance (McPherson & Hallam, 2009; O'Bryan, 2013).

Blades-Zeller (2003) found that teachers believed singer quality could be codified into six main figures: vocal potential; quality and core of the sound; musical sensitivity; expressiveness (the desire to communicate); technical proficiency; and performance personality (p. 102). Teachers sensed a proficient singer was more likely to have several components of ability than voice quality alone. While raw vocal talent doesn't appear to be taught, it is certainly mediated through childhood experiences and membership of particular cultural or social groups that value the classically trained voice. Ideally, the singer can then be trained to have longevity in the profession through a complementary vocal technique that supports and enhances the natural qualities of the voice.

Cultural psychology and teaching and learning relationships

Teaching and learning do not occur in a vacuum–the cultural setting is always embedded in what people learn, as are the shared understandings that develop between teacher and student. Bruner wrote "learning and thinking are always *situated* in a cultural setting and always dependent on the utilization of cultural resources" (Bruner, 1996, p.4). While he was fascinated by the "computational" view of mind–that is, how our biological minds are sophisticated computational systems, he was also interested in the way that culture "shapes the minds of individuals", in which "individual expression inheres in meaning making, assigning meaning to things in different settings on particular occasions" (1996, p.3). To Bruner, "meanings provide a basis for cultural exchange"(ibid.), and on this basis, he claims, "knowing and communicating are in their nature highly interdependent, indeed virtually inseparable" (ibid.). Rogoff further articulates this concept, explaining:

> cognitive processes develop together with cultural processes across centuries and continents…cultural-historical research has pointed to the importance of including cultural tools in the analysis of cognitive processes and led the way to understanding that thinking is collaborative and distributed among people in shared endeavours. (2003, p. 281)

In this project, examining the historical culture of classical singing was central to investigating the beliefs and values of singing teachers and their students, and how they function within this particular historical framework. More than this, though, was the realisation that classical singing education functions at the tertiary level within prescribed educational boundaries–through music schools and conservatoires, which have their own cultural habits (Rogoff, 2003, Kingsbury, 1988). These institutions and their cultural habits are set within the intersecting cultures of musical education and the music professions in mostly European (classical) music. Singers' and teachers' lives are conducted within the cultural practices in which they operate, at every level. As Barrett explains, "we cannot separate mind and cognition from culture and context, values and beliefs, and a culturally mediated

identity" (Barrett, 2011, p. 10). Alongside the institutions and their identities are the identities of their participants, how they interact with the institution to form their sense of identity, as singer, learner and participant in the culture.

For classical singers, the desire to take up singing as a career pathway is reliant in no small part on encouragement from their families, friends and peers. It is then the relationship of the student with participants in their chosen musical culture that helps foster a sense of belonging and connectedness. Once a decision has been made and successful admission to a conservatoire has been attained, then the role of the conservatoire in fostering and fomenting the student's skill and ability must be considered. Peers, singing teachers, lecturers, and even the educational and support structures of the institution each play a part in supporting the student's decision. The next section explores the research on these relationships.

Family and early musical experiences

Students who take up a musical instrument are often encouraged to do so at the behest of a parent, or as a curriculum requirement of a school. Other children may wish to start learning an instrument due to an intrinsic desire, or because one or more of their peer group is learning an instrument. Research by Sloboda and Howe (1992), Sosniak (1985, 1987), Hallam, (1998), Davidson, Moore, Sloboda & Howe (1998), McPherson & Davidson (2002), Creech (2006, 2009), McPherson and Zimmerman (2002), and McPherson (2009) consistently found that high levels of parental support are an important aspect of a child's engagement with music making. Creech likewise found "personal support was found to be associated with persistence with learning and musical attainment as well as with increasing pupil enjoyment of music and motivation" (2009, p. 299). Therefore, the more positively involved a parent is in the music making of a child, the more likely the child is to continue playing into adulthood.

Likewise of music teachers in the early years of a musician's life, Sloboda and Howe (1992) found that "every effort should be made to ensure that the very first instrumental teacher is someone whom the child will like. This seems to be a vital prerequisite of outstanding achievement" (1992, p. 292). According to their research, warmth and enthusiasm were important music teacher attributes for ongoing enjoyment and engagement with music by future music students. Creech found too that positive interpersonal relationships between parent and teacher were important, as students function best "when they perceive the adults as both caring and supportive of autonomy and when they are able to engage in ongoing mutual interaction with adults who continue to have a stake in their development and act as their advocate" (2009, p. 300).

At the tertiary level, the role of parents is diminished somewhat, but their emotional and financial support is nevertheless appreciated throughout the duration of the student's tertiary studies. Welch and Ockelford (2009, p. 314) noted that the classical musician's most important musical influences were "parents, instrumental/vocal teachers, significant musical

events, professional colleagues and previous membership of county (regional) music ensembles". Experiences outside of the tertiary setting, whether musical, financial, social or personal, were shown to have an effect on the overall sense of wellbeing of the student (Burt & Mills, 2006) particularly in the transition between school to conservatoire, and this is not to be underestimated, as these experiences arguably impact on relationships within the individual lesson.

The next section once again corresponds to the microsystem section of the Bronfenbrenner model, where experiences and relationships help to determine personal values and beliefs about singing teaching and learning:
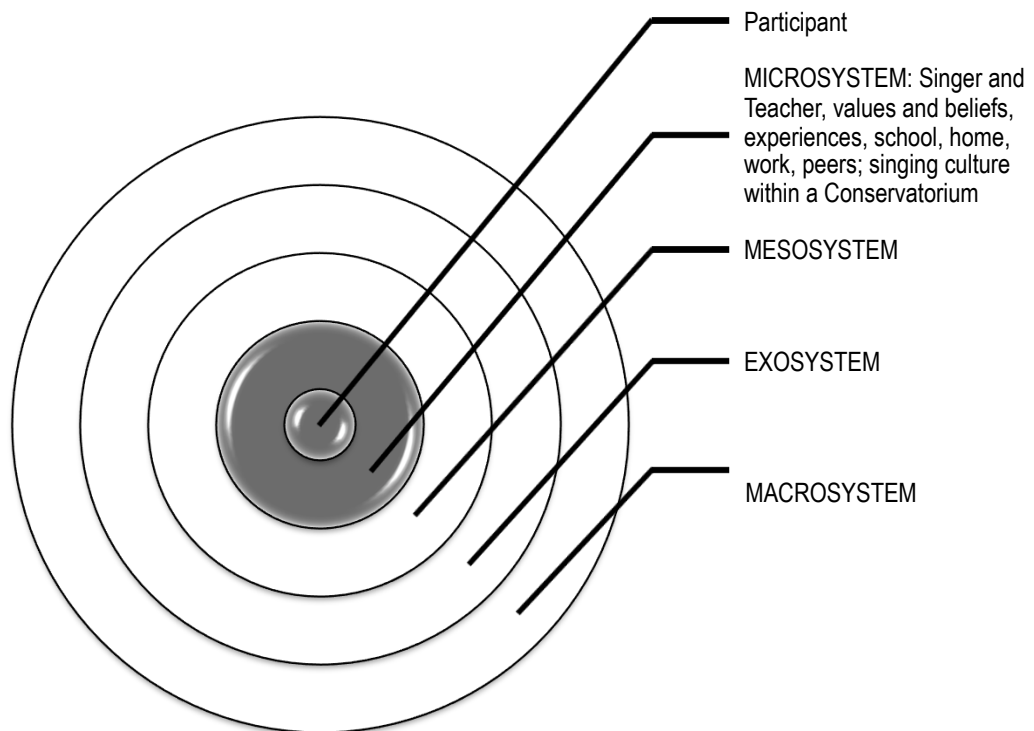
Figure 8: The Microsystem

Current research in teaching and learning relationships

Studies have shown that the music teacher is a primary source of motivation (Presland, 2005; Chapman, 2006; Gaunt, 2009; O'Bryan, 2010), and that they "must have the ability to stretch their student's musical commitment in a way that is inspirational" (Lehmann, Sloboda and Woody, 2007, p. 51). Welch and Ockelford also observe that higher education tutors were considered "significant agents in a communal process of advanced musical learning" (2009, p. 314). Research on relationships between conservatoire students and their instrumental teacher by Presland in 2005 suggested that an appropriate fit is made between undergraduate musician and teacher. Within current research examining attitudes and perceptions of music lessons in the conservatoire, Gaunt's (2009) study found that

students unanimously "considered one-to-one tuition to be an extremely important part of their work" (p. 25). Presland (2005) found that students considered their teachers to be inspiring, motivating and a catalyst to learning. They also described their teachers as mentors and guides and that the role of teachers was to create self-reliant students. Likewise Burwell noted that students were warm and positive about their teachers and that "they appreciated their high levels of expertise, often admired them as professional performers, and–almost always–reported highly valued relationships with them" (Burwell, 2005, p. 208).

Enns (2004), however, warns that the student/teacher relationship can be problematic, particularly when the student defers to authority and feels a false sense of loyalty despite suffering vocal problems, and when the teacher succumbs to the temptation of being omniscient, not admitting that the problems may be caused by them. Likewise Hanken (2008) reported that power imbalances were of concern to students and teachers. Gaunt (2008) also noted potentially negative aspects of the relationship and a passive approach to learning by the students, due to the comfortable learning environment. Of all investigations into the one-to-one studio Persson's 1996 study of concert pianist and teacher Mrs White appeared the most damning, finding that the teacher lacked capacity to plan technical development in her students, which lowered their opinion of her teaching ability and respect for her as a teacher, despite their opinion of her as a friendly, easy-going person.

Nevertheless, Hanken and Nerland reported in 2004 that despite outward signs of change, "a strongly asymmetric relationship exists between the principal instrument teacher and the student, even if the teacher tries to play down his or her authority and the relationship appears to be characterised by equality, from the outside" (2004, p. 6). They also reported such relationships were expected by the participants and wanted among the students. They noted "the presence of authority is prevalent in this kind of educational setting, and is to a great extent driven by the students' ambition to learn through interaction with their teachers" (p. 7-8). These findings, it must be argued, in part perpetuates the perception that the master/apprentice style of teaching is still predominant in music instruction, and is a preferred mode of teaching by students.

The above findings suggest that while a positive relationship between teacher and student is vital to the learning and teaching outcomes of the student, poor pedagogical strategies by the teacher and an uncomfortable deference by the student to the teacher in the face of unhappy learning conditions can have negative consequences for both teacher and student. Burland and Davidson assert that music institutions must therefore "capitalise on the potential for positive influence from these relationships and guard against negative ramifications by investing in the professional development of those who occupy the role of instrumental/vocal teacher" (2004, p. 329).

Values and beliefs about singing teaching and learning relationships

The learning and teaching relationship between a singer and their teacher appears to be fundamental to the student's positive vocal development. Mason (2000) observes that the singing voice is

> actually part of the person who is to 'play upon it', and therefore the psychological state of the singer can have the most profound effect on the quality of sound that emerges… the ability of teachers to give encouragement and motivate their students is clearly of no small significance. (p. 204)

Kemp suggested that singers are "quite unique" (1996, p. 175), due to their embodied instrument, and that because of the difficulty of identifying internal vocal sounds and sensations singers may have a greater dependence upon their teachers than other musicians. Clemmons (2006), in her investigation into rapport in the voice-teaching studio, likewise found "it is difficult to overestimate the impact one teacher can have on a student. For some, the teacher-student relationship can be life changing. Teachers who relate to students with trust and respect help to build strong relationships" (Clemmons, 2006, p. 209). Likewise, McCarthy writes that singers come to their singing teachers with a range of dreams and goals that require immense tact and care on the part of the teacher and that "what happens between the singer and the teacher is therefore of great consequence" (McCarthy, from Chapman, 2006, p. 156).

There is a sense from singing teachers that they feel partly responsible for the emotional state of their singers, because the emotional state of the singing student is tied to their voice and sense of self. One such singing teacher, Patenaude-Yarnell states,

> The emotional and physical well being of singers has significant bearing on the healthy function of the singing voice, making it inevitable that the teacher will be faced with issues that are nontechnical. Most voice teachers are not certified psychoanalysts or psychiatrists, yet what one says to singers and how one advises them will play a great role in their personal and professional lives. (2004, p. 395)

Likewise, Oakland notes that for professional singers, "the pressures imposed on opera singers by directors, conductors and management mean that sometimes a singer's only means of support is their personal teacher or coach" (2014, p. 232). Thus, how a teacher responds to a singing student seems to play a substantial role in that student's ability to sing well. Nerland and Hanken's study (2004), which explored trust relationships between expert music teacher and student, found trust was a crucial aspect of the one-to-one learning and teaching relationship, partly because of the "didactical construct" of the master/apprentice-like approach, but also because access to an experienced musician provided students with access to "crucial knowledge and standards of the discipline" (2004, p. 3). Also, the

mentorship offered by the teacher as member of the profession was also perceived as vital for developing musicians and their own perception of belonging to that profession. Likewise Presland (2005), Gaunt, (2008, 2009), Carey and Grant (2014) found trust between teacher and student to be an intrinsic and indispensable aspect of the learning and teaching relationship.

Goffi (1996), Lashbrook (2004), Clemmons (2007), and Serra (2011) are a handful of researchers examining the interpersonal aspect of the learning and teaching relationship in the singing studio. Goffi's evaluation of Abele's five-factor rating scale for voice teacher effectiveness found that, rather than confirming the Abeles five-factor scale, a two-factor scale was evident: "a broad technical and instructional sub-scale (being cognitive in its nature) and an interpersonal scale (being affective in its nature)" (1996, p. 1), with one of her research recommendations being to explore personality and behaviours in the applied voice studio.

Lashbrook's thesis in 2004 explored co-dependency in the voice-teaching studio, recommending instead an interdependent approach by teachers and students to help "create an environment which empowers students to become interdependent singing artists" (2004, p. v). Her work recommended the use of tools employed by therapy and treatment centres to encourage growth in the student.

Clemmons explored rapport in the voice teaching studio, finding that interpersonal relationships are vital to the success of applied lessons, creating "an emotional connection that empowers motivation and learning in a dynamic way" (2007, p. 1). Her findings noted four categorical themes foundational to rapport and successful lessons: 1/ expertise and self-confidence by the teacher; 2/ safety and mutual respect in the studio; 3/ clear expectations and high standards linked with distinct relational boundaries; and that 4/ an affirmative, enthusiastic teaching style infects students with enthusiasm and self-confidence.

Serra-Dawa's study of teacher-student relationships through psychological measures including the adult attachment scale found that "singing teachers and their students tend to behave according to their personal and psychological characterisation" (2014, p. 201), and that the quality and level of personal relationship between singer and teacher were important for successful learning and teaching outcomes. Blades-Zeller found in her study the teacher "seeks to guide and shape the student's raw talent, to make the student aware of possibilities beyond the page" (2003, p. 101), and that once the immediate goals of technical proficiency are transcended, then the student's personal and artistic mettle must be developed to allow the singer to effectively compete as a professional singer. Therefore, it might be suggested, the teacher is responsible for more than mere skill building, content knowledge or voice building: the teacher may be responsible for guiding the student through their psychology, mediating their relationships with others and for guiding their membership into the culture of classical singing.

Eminent singers' values and beliefs about learning and teaching relationships

In biographies and writings by eminent singer practitioners the importance of the learning and teaching relationship is made clear. In 2010 I published a narrative thematic analysis (Riessman, 2008) of four Australian singer autobiographies of Dame Nellie Melba (1980/1925), Dame Joan Hammond (1970), June Bronhill (1987) and Lauris Elms (2001), to investigate perceptions regarding the relationship between singer and teacher. Deci and Ryan's Self Determination Theory (1985, 2000, 2006) was employed to articulate the essential prerequisites for a life in singing and to determine the prime indicators for psychological growth and well-being in these artists. The values and beliefs held by these eminent artists regarding their relationships with their teachers included: trust, respect, affinity, power relationships, and gratitude. The relationship between eminent singer and their teacher was acknowledged by each singer to be a crucial factor in determining future success (O'Bryan, 2010). Each singer also recognised the deeply personal and intimate relationship they shared with their teacher, even over lengthy periods of time, suggesting that the bonds created by this learning and teaching relationship go beyond the purely pedagogical.

Renee Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli, Placido Domingo, Kiri Te Kanawa and Luciano Pavarotti are amongst a number of singing artists who have contributed writings about their singing experiences, including the relationships with their singing teachers. Likewise, several singer interview compilations such as those by Hines (1985), Matheopoulos (1991) and Necula (2009) provide insightful practitioner commentary concerning the importance of relationship in the learning and teaching dyad, which appears to corroborate the findings by Goffi, Lashbrook, Clemmons, Blades-Zeller and Serra. Soprano Renée Fleming is perhaps the most reflexive of current artists about the process she underwent of learning to sing. One of her many insightful comments about singing teaching states:

> In a young singer's training, a teacher and a student have to develop a terminology, to find a language in which they can easily communicate. The essential component is rapport. The student has to feel cared for, because singing is such an exercise in vulnerability. The voice, after all, is the only instrument that can't be sold…For that reason it's also important that teachers be able to navigate through a person's psychology. Criticism can feel extremely personal when you are the instrument that's being discussed (2004, p. 21).

Her statement suggests that communication and a mutual language; rapport, empathy and care of the student are prerequisites for a successful learning and teaching relationship, echoing the research findings. These oral, empirical accounts inform us about historical practices and the commonly held values and beliefs teachers and singers have regarding singing training.

The next section of the review explores singing pedagogy. The review explores tacit knowledge, student and teacher values and beliefs about singing pedagogy, historical approaches and pedagogical strategies, and current research in the classical singing teaching studio. In terms of the Bronfenbrenner model, this section corresponds generally to the macrosystem section, where dominant ideologies about classical singing over four hundred years have helped shape current thinking about singing teaching and learning:
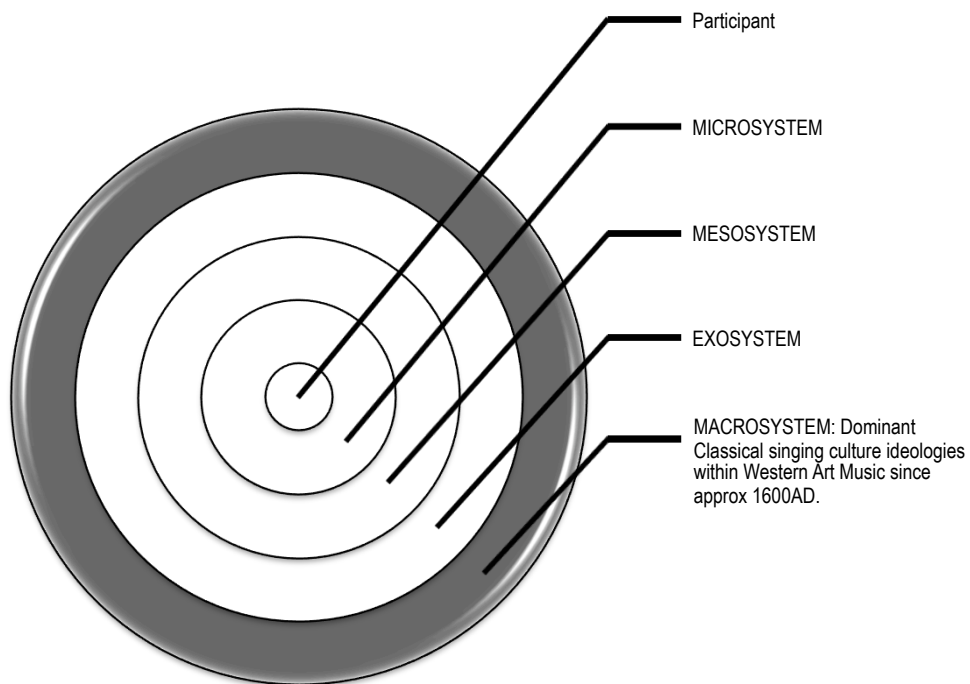
Figure 9: The Macrosystem

Singing teaching and tacit knowledge

Mason (2000) makes the observation that

> Every singing teacher brings his own individual personality, a different cultural and intellectual background, and different tastes to the teaching/learning situation. In a sense, therefore, one could say that there are as many ways to teach singing as there are teachers and students. (p. 204)

These dispositions and attributes, values and beliefs formed by the teacher as part of their professional knowledge (Triantafyllaki, 2010), might be considered the tacit knowledge and connoisseurship that trains the student in ways peculiar to the profession of classical singing. Teachers may or may not be aware of their own values and beliefs, and their dispositions and attributes in singing teaching and learning. Polanyi claimed that all "knowledge has the structure of tacit knowledge" (Polanyi, 1962, p. 601), and that we cannot separate knowing from being. Bowman, who in 1980 discussed Polanyi's theory within a

framework of musical experience and education, agrees, writing "what the teacher knows, he knows from a tacit constellation of values, feelings and experiences which make that knowledge meaningful to him" (Bowman, 1980, p. 235). He notes that "mind and body are ultimately inseparable, and all doing relies on a knowing which is indispensable to its execution" (ibid., p. 246), which mirrors cultural psychology theories. As Polanyi states, "there is (1) knowing a thing *by attending to it* (focal knowing) and (2) knowing a thing *by relying on our awareness of it for the purpose of attending to an entity to which it contributes* (tacit, or subsidiary knowing)" (1962, p. 61).

In perhaps a somewhat awkward connection, in cognitive terms these forms of knowing might also be referred to as declarative (explicit) learning and procedural (implicit) learning (Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014). There are things we learn by explicit verbal processing, and other things we learn by doing them, engaging in them, and being part of a culture that embraces them, without being consciously aware of what it is we are doing. In classical singing training, tacit knowledge of the physical instrument is partly a type of embodied knowledge that can only be transmitted or communicated by the teacher with some difficulty. It is the moving in and out of focal knowing and subsidiary knowing that appears to characterise much of the master apprentice approach, from which classical singing training is derived.

The development of connoisseurship in classical singing training has rarely been examined in the literature, but rather has been assumed as common knowledge and transmitted orally or through practitioner reflections and memoirs. Polanyi explains connoisseurship as something that can be "communicated only by example, not by precept… you must go through a long course of experience under the guidance of a master" (1958, p. 56). In other words, development of skills and connoisseurship is "as much as an art of doing as it is an art of knowing" (ibid.), which requires guidance by a master for enculturation into the practices of that domain. Each teacher will bring their own aesthetic values and beliefs about the qualities they perceive are required in the classical singing voice. A teacher will then base their pedagogical approach to the student on those aesthetic, emotional and auditory values, which will stem in part from how they themselves were trained and in what musical field, whether early music or opera or the concert platform. They will also refer to their own physical perception on how their own voice works within their own body to make judgements about how they perceive the embodied workings of the student's voice. It is this inner knowing and embodiment of voice that is then communicated to the student.

Then too, values pertaining to artistic perception as singer and musician are central to how one teaches. Like most music making, there are a range of subjective measures regarding individual voice quality, and the nature of the listener that "are bound up in aesthetic, emotional and auditory reactions to sound" (p. 4). Given the vast array of literature on perceptual sound qualities of the voice, Mitchell and Kenny (2007) note there are now

universally accepted visual representations of increased energy between 2–4 kHz for the classical voice, and that perceptual studies indicate that listeners show "some degree of reliability and consistency in their overall judgments of good and poor vocal and instrumental performance" (2007, p. 2). Nevertheless, they argue there are few systematic research studies that have "identified objective (measurable) factors associated with musical potential or "talent"" (ibid.). The individual listener therefore relies upon a subjective perception of vocal quality, which is invariably mediated by their own experiences and musical preferences.

Values and beliefs about classical singing attributes and dispositions

Teachers bring to the studio their values and beliefs about the culture of classical singing, which includes perceptions about the attributes and dispositions required to succeed in the profession. A few studies examining these values and beliefs include Blades-Zeller's (2003) study, in which she asked a number of eminent American singing teachers about what they perceive is required in the industry; Oakland's (2012, 2014) study on redundant opera choristers, Sandgren's study into the problems suffered by opera singers (2002) and Schindler's (2010) study on the performer-teacher continuum.

Blades-Zeller's findings indicated five key areas of personal attributes considered by teachers as indispensable to success, which she codified under 1/ the voice; 2/ intellect; 3/ application/motivation; 4/ musicianship and 5/ personality and personal development. Attributes included an outstanding and interesting voice with reliable and secure technique; having an intellect comprising good concentration, imagination, dramatic instinct, musical intelligence, and the ability to learn music quickly. She also noted singers need to possess a determination and capacity for hard work, show discipline, an intrinsic motivation to sing and communicate, and to have good musicianship, language and keyboard skills. Finally, Blades-Zeller found personal attributes required in classical singing included punctuality, dependability, professionalism and good business sense, resilience, mental toughness and determination, creativity, sensitivity, collegiality, personality and charisma (2003, pp. 105–107).

Oakland's study exploring opera choristers' redundancies and identity found that opera singer identity was tied intrinsically with paid work and the "social and cultural status given to the job title" (2014, p. 221), which she suggests is an identity based primarily on external validation. She notes that trends in the opera industry, which include changes to opera audience numbers, advances in technology and the development of live simulcast performances, are requiring singers to be "multi-skilled and flexible in their approach to making a living" (p. 222). She advised that for teachers this means encouraging students to continually reflect on their musical and vocal sense of self, while honing their technical skills, and that students need realistic role models who engage in portfolio careers.

Sandgren's study found that opera singers were significantly affected by criticism from others, fears of vocal and health indisposition and performance anxiety and that they spent much time vocalizing to prove the existence and quality of the voice (2002). She found "vocal perfectionism and function are seen not only as goals, but more as the means for deepening the artistic commitment and autonomy" (2002, p. 20), which suggests maintenance of a healthy lifestyle and rigorous practice regime are considered important attributes for an optimal career, and that performance anxiety and excessive criticism need to be mitigated.

Schindler's study found that both teachers and students believed a performance career was a valuable contributor to student knowledge and that the attributes required of a professional singer were often taken for granted by performers themselves. She found, however, her interviewees "recognised an explicit set of skills that constitute a singer's craft" (2010, p. 35), which included high levels of vocal, linguistic, stylistic and musical proficiency; insightful interpretation; movement, acting, dancing, performance etiquette; professional conduct; entrepreneurship, and business acumen including self-promotion. She also found teachers who had undergone a personal or vocal crisis were more likely to have reflected thereafter on their teaching practice and she noted a "widely held belief" (ibid.) that teachers who had had such a crisis were actually better able to facilitate change in the studio.

Given the paucity of research examining the attributes and dispositions required for a career in classical singing, it may be speculated that if students graduate from the conservatoire with an imperfect understanding of what is now required to pursue a career in the profession it is not altogether the fault of either the institution or their teachers. Information comes once again from practitioners of the art. Necula's 2009 collection of interviews sits alongside those by Matheopoulos (1991) and Hines (1986) for its up-to-date reporting of how practitioners see the business of opera. While a meta-analysis of these practitioner values and beliefs was beyond the capacity of this study, a reading of the interviews suggests similar values and beliefs promulgating perseverance, determination, talent, business acumen, personableness, hard work and the like are considered vital for success in the profession.

Nevertheless, a recent article by Meyer and Edwards (2014) suggests that American singing teachers and conservatoires generally have an outdated view of the current trends in opera. They question whether music colleges are adequately preparing singers for a professional life, arguing that Musical Theatre and CCM (contemporary commercial music) are growing and that opera audiences are declining. They suggest cross-training the classical singer to include the above styles, which they claim will better prepare singers for a performing career. While it was not possible in this study to examine current trends in the opera industry, it appears that financial constraints and reduced audiences are having a marked impact on the industry as a whole, which will inevitably impact on how singers are prepared for a career within conservatoires and music schools. Singing teachers will need to

arm themselves with new information about what is valued in the current market and work with their students to manage these changes. The information may challenge their own *artistic* values and beliefs about what they consider are the necessary attributes and dispositions required for a successful career in classical voice.

Student values and beliefs about classical singing and singing pedagogy

Student values and beliefs that pertain particularly to classical singing and pedagogy are not well evident, with most music studies focussing on the undergraduate experience of all musicians (Mills, 2002, 2004; Davies, 2004; Burt & Mills, 2006; Burt, Lancaster, Lebler et al, 2007; Creech, Papageorgi, Duffy et al, 2008). Of the more recent studies, Harrison's (2003) preliminary study into the attributes of Australian singing teachers, found that singing students expected teachers to be respectful and flexible; to have knowledge of singing physiology and appropriate repertoire; plus possess aural, keyboard, language and organizational skills; and to "communicate effectively with enthusiasm, encouragement, good humour and patience" (Harrison, 2003, p. 11).

Another study conducted by O'Bryan (2010a, 2010b, 2013) found that singing students overwhelmingly perceived their singing teachers to be equally expert teachers and singers, with good communication, interpersonal skills and a caring, respectful and trustful connection to the student. Students expected teachers to motivate and encourage, perceiving that teachers expected them to work hard. They believed their teachers as mentors clearly explained vocal technical issues, often through repertoire, but equally through voice science and physiology. They perceived that aural modelling and use of gesture were common pedagogical strategies. They believed that artistry, character and musical expressivity were taught, that goals were discussed and that time in the studio was used efficiently. Students also perceived their voices to be part of them and that singing was vitally important to their sense of self and self-efficacy, reporting in equal measure feelings of elation and frustration.

Historical approaches and attitudes to singing pedagogy

Singing pedagogy is traditionally and commonly the province of singers with performing experience (Callaghan, 1998; Collyer, 2010; Mitchell, 2008; Welch et al, 2005). Welch et al claim "singing teachers draw on their personal experiences within an essentially hegemonic oral culture. Such experiences dominate and differentiate the language of singing pedagogy literature from that found in texts on the science of singing." (Welch et al, 2005, p. 226). Some twelve hundred treatises and teaching manuals on singing and singing pedagogy, published by teacher/performers from years 1517–1992 AD, reveal the extent and range of these experiences (Oxford Music Online, 2014). Prior to the twentieth century and before the advent of recorded sound and image, singing teaching was based partly on imitation but also on observation and imagery that intended to explain internal or embodied sensation. Surprisingly, as Wistreich notes, "the sheer consistency of the information we have about the

fundamentals of the art of singing is remarkable. Some aspects of vocal performance which were constantly repeated throughout the period are as obviously necessary now as they were then" (2000, p. 178).

One early practitioner who recorded his experiences in singing teaching was Pier Francesco Tosi, (approximately 1653-1732) a castrato and singing teacher who wrote *Opinioni de'cantori antichi e moderni* (1723). He codified important aesthetic principles, gave practical directions for singers, defended ancient style against the moderns and recommended practices still in use: "when he studies his lesson at home, let him sometimes sing before a looking glass, not to be enamoured with his own person but to avoid those convulsive motions of the body or face" (from Pilkington, 1987, p. 40). Later, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, singing teacher Giovanni Battista Lamperti offered a more scientific approach to vocal pedagogy, based in part on the research in singing and voice physiology commenced by Garcia in 1840, however the use of the mirror is still recommended: "He should study before a mirror, in order to acquire a pleasant expression and never lift the shoulders, etc. If the pupil has the weakness of holding his tongue high or keeping his teeth closed, the mirror is the only way to overcome it" (Lamperti, 1957, p. 7).

Wistreich claims these and other authors "reflect a long tradition of voice training, passed from one generation to the next in the master-apprentice system of professional voice training; there is no reason why it should not still form the basis of singing teaching today" (2000, p. 184). For such an embodied instrument, this approach to learning from a master practitioner seems the most appropriate choice, as there is little to guide the student to understanding the human instrument except by expert feedback.

Collyer notes that in 1854, when Garcia's laryngoscope was developed, "the age of *singing pedagogy based on scientific principles* began" (2010, p. 88). From there to the twenty-first century, she claims, it is now largely taken for granted that voice science forms an important part of singing pedagogy, and that it is a "valuable ally in weeding out fallacy from our historical legacy" (p. 89). While it is beyond the scope of this study to examine various scientific investigations of the human voice except to link them to pedagogical practices for the classical voice, it is important to note that singing teaching is now considered irrevocably changed through the acquisition of voice science, and that teachers are expected to understand and value the most up-to-date information. However, as Collyer explains, knowledge of voice science is only a small part of the singing teacher's skill set and it is beyond the capacity of most to keep up with the research (2010).

Classical singing pedagogy is both at the forefront of research in voice science and part of a tradition that scorns such research. This schism is by no means new. The divide between "scientific" and "traditional" approaches has been observed since Garcia first developed the laryngoscope in 1854, two articles going so far as to lampoon the writers' experience with three different singing teachers and their approaches (Lunn, 1885; Kim, 1922). In the later part

of the twentieth century Callaghan (1998, 2000) explored how well Australian singing teachers knew, understood and imparted scientific and physiological explanations of the voice within their studios, finding at that time, teachers had generally poor knowledge of voice physiology.

Nevertheless, researchers such as Titze (1994), Sataloff (2005), Vennard (1967), Fields (1947), Sundberg (1987), Bunch, (1995), Thurman and Welch (2000) and many others who have investigated voice physiology, psychology and acoustics have all challenged long held assumptions about how best to teach and learn to sing by providing clear empirical data about the physiology and physics of singing (and, at times, conflicting data), but it has been argued by Miller (1996) and others that many singing teachers do not know much at all about the anatomy and acoustics of the voice, and that they do not want to know. Despite significant advances in voice physiology and acoustics, there remain a proportion of voice teachers who convincingly argue that all the knowledge about voice science in the world will not necessarily make their *diagnostic capacity* as a teacher any better, nor validate the artistry of singing. Miller asserted in 1996 "it is still felt that factual examination of the singing art should be strenuously resisted because it might undermine artistic impulses" (p. 72). This blind adherence to tradition is one not easily understood or explained; particularly as in America there is an established practice of informed pedagogy studies in singing (Schindler, 2010). It might best be explained as a lingering hangover from the master-as-authority educative practices that developed from the medieval guilds and became what Shulman terms a "signature pedagogy" (2005).

Pedagogical approaches of singing teachers thus are in part informed by historical attitudes about singing, but also because the body and vocal apparatus have not changed in thousands of years, even as changes in vocal styles, aesthetic values and musical genres have necessitated changes to pedagogical approaches, and science has added knowledge to how the singing voice functions.

Current research into pedagogical practices of the one-to-one music lesson

Research into pedagogical practices of the one-to-one music lesson is currently an area of burgeoning interest, but has a relatively long history. Abeles in 1975 created a model to examine the perspectives of music students on the attributes of their applied music instructor (all instruments). This five-factor model divided applied instruction into: rapport, instructional systemization, instructional skill, organization and musical knowledge, although the five-factor model was not strongly confirmed by Goffi's study (1996) of the effectiveness of studio voice teachers, who instead found a two-factor scale of technical and instruction skills, and interpersonal skill. This suggests that for singing teaching at least, two factors appear important in how effective a singing teacher is perceived to be: interpersonal skills and pedagogical skills.

There appear to be two key areas of research focus in one-to-one music lesson pedagogy. The first focuses on the mode of teaching, such as the master/apprentice mode or the mentor/mentee mode. The second focuses on the types of pedagogical strategies, through such approaches as Socratic, didactic/instructional, or facilitative. Teaching modes and pedagogical strategies tend to intertwine and there seem to be as many ways to analyse teaching modes and pedagogical strategies as there are teachers.

It is generally agreed that one-to-one lessons assume a master/apprentice model (Jorgensen, 2000; Gaunt, 2008). In classical singing it is presumed the mode of teaching is a master/apprentice one (Callaghan, 2000; Hughes, 2013; Howard, Welch, Brereton et al, 2004). However, teaching modes used have been found in empirical studies to include the master-apprentice transmission mode and the mentor-guide mode. According to Lehmann, Woody and Sloboda (2007), these two modes are the ones most commonly adopted by teachers.

Zhukov's study noted individual patterns of instruction and learning amongst instrumental teachers and students, many following what she terms the "maestro-style" teaching and learning pattern (2007, p. 114), which may be alternatively named the master/apprentice mode of learning and teaching. However Zhukov also identified other teaching approaches, particularly by women teachers, where she noted a more facilitative teaching style (2004). In Carey and Grant's 2014 study on one-to-one tertiary music lessons they found evidence of both, at times simultaneously, suggesting that teachers adopt whatever mode of teaching is appropriate for the student at that time. Certainly their study indicates that teachers will move to a mentor-mentee mode over time, once the motor-learned aspects of the instrument have been mastered and as the student develops independence in learning.

Within the two main teaching modes, Young, Burwell and Pickup's study of instrumental and singing lessons identified seven different pedagogical strategies in use by both instrumental and voice teachers, according to their interpretation of the British Music Advisors' National Association publication of 1995. These strategies include: Command, Practice, Shared, Self-check, Guided discovery, Open ended, and Flexible (2003, p. 143). In other research, effective teacher behaviours and pedagogical strategies have been extensively studied in music education, frequently within classroom music. Areas of research have been roughly divided into three parts: music teacher effectiveness and competency; personal attributes of a teacher; and instructional techniques (pedagogical strategies). Effective music teachers provide systematic instruction with well-defined steps, clear and detailed instructions, provide active practice for the student, monitor the work and give systematic feedback, corrections and instruction (Rosenthal, 1984; Tait, 1992; Hendel, 1995; Goolsby, 1996, 1997; Duke, Prickett & Jellison, 1998; Duke, 1999; Duke & Henninger, 2002; Yarbrough, 2002).

At advanced levels, effective teacher attributes include high levels of expertise (L'Hommidieu, 1992, Davidson et al, 1998), and characteristics of successful music teachers include, amongst many qualities: broad interests, confidence, creativity and imagination, enthusiasm, being caring, encouraging, relaxed, trusting, and being fair, flexible, patient, persistent and realistic (Pembrook & Craig, 2002).

Successful instructional techniques (pedagogical strategies) have included the use of modelling (Tait, 1992), guided diagnostic processes (Woody, 2003), and the use of imagery in instruction (Tait, 1992; Woody, 2000; Davidson, 1989). Finally, pedagogical strategies for artistic and musical expressivity have been examined through studies on how pedagogy and cultural conditioning affects musical behaviours (Welch, 2000); how teachers impart artistic ideas to students (Woody, 2000, 2003; Blades-Zeller, 2003; Zhukov, 2004; Burwell, 2006; Karlsson & Juslin, 2008), the use of mental imagery (Haddon, 2007), and the effect of emotion in music performance (Juslin, 2009).

The findings from these and other research have informed much of what is presumed to happen in the one-to-one lesson but other research has informed our understanding of what happens in the classical singing lesson.

Current classical singing pedagogical practices

As Fields noted in 1947, the art of singing is complex, incorporating psychology, physiology and acoustic sciences within its framework. Classical singing is dependent to a large degree on motor learned skills (Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014). In cognitive terms motor learned skills are procedural (implicit) and not declarative (explicit), therefore singing is a procedural skill, which nevertheless combines a range of other affective, perceptual and cognitive operations (Nisbet, 2010). Procedural learning, according to Roth and Verdolini-Abbott (2014, p. 79), "occurs as a result of prior exposure and can occur outside of awareness". Consequently, the learning process for motor skills is perceptual, not verbal. This poses problems for singing teachers in terms of communication of the perceptual processing needed for a motor-learned skill.

Pedagogical strategies

The pedagogical strategies employed by singing teachers are usually assumed to be didactic or instructional, because of the motor-learned skills required but also because the teacher is the feedback source for singers who cannot hear their own voices the way their audience can. According to Roth and Verdolini-Abbott, "training should emphasize attention to and processing of acoustic and kinaesthetic sensory targets" (2014, p. 80). They suggest a student's post-hoc analysis of biomechanics can actually be "disruptive to the learning process" (ibid.). This suggests singing students engaged in attaining skill acquisition need not be too reflective about what action specifically was activated, rather, to attend to the sensory target changes they had experienced on the prior task and apply them to the next task, as

conscious intervention tends to interfere with the procedural processing needed for normal motor control and may actually hinder the learning process. This knowledge may affect a teacher's pedagogical approach, however, research on motor-learned singing is still emerging and has not yet been widely reported as impacting on pedagogical strategies in the studio.

The following section codifies some of the requirements, tools and pedagogical approaches in the singing studio. Literature on time management and goal setting, motor learning, assessment practices and communication approaches are also briefly outlined. Pedagogical strategies that encompass vocal and physical health, formant shaping, vowel shaping, language and accents, aural acuity, musicianship, musical expressivity, breath management and support or postural alignment are not explored at this time as these areas require much more space than can be adequately managed here. It is acknowledged, however, that these areas and more are vital aspects of classical singing education.

Perceptual assessment of the singing voice

Much research highlights the difficulty singers have of perceiving their own voices (Southcott and Mitchell, 2013; Shrivastav & Wingate, 2008; Miller, 2008, McCoy, 2004; Miller, 1996; Vennard, 1967) because of the proximity of the ears to internal sensation and vibrations and the sound output. Therefore much of the available research in singing pedagogy revolves around aural perceptions of the singing voice and how the teacher communicates this to the student, which as Howard, Welch and Brereton et al., (2004) acknowledge is problematic due to potential misinterpretation of information.

The following diagram shows the three components that affect a singer's perception of their voice:
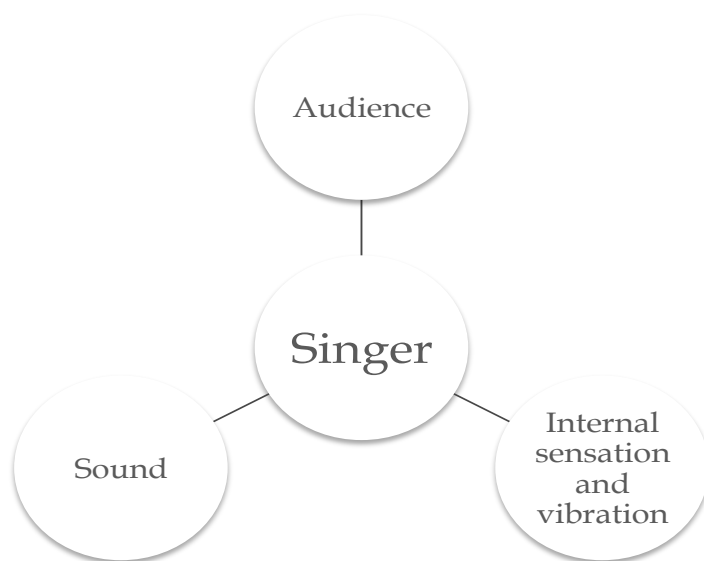
Figure 10: Components affecting singer perception of their voice

In the typical teacher/student interaction a cyclic, reiterative approach is usually evident, where a student will sing, the teacher will provide feedback, then the student will attempt to effect change according to what they perceive is the intended outcome. This is a simultaneous feedback loop, also known as Knowledge of Results (Welch, Howard, Himonides et al, 2005). They note that "feedback in singing is both intrapersonal and interpersonal" (p. 229), and that an internal feedback system needs to be mediated from without by an external source (such as a teacher), as without this even minor idiosyncratic behaviours can be rehearsed into habit.
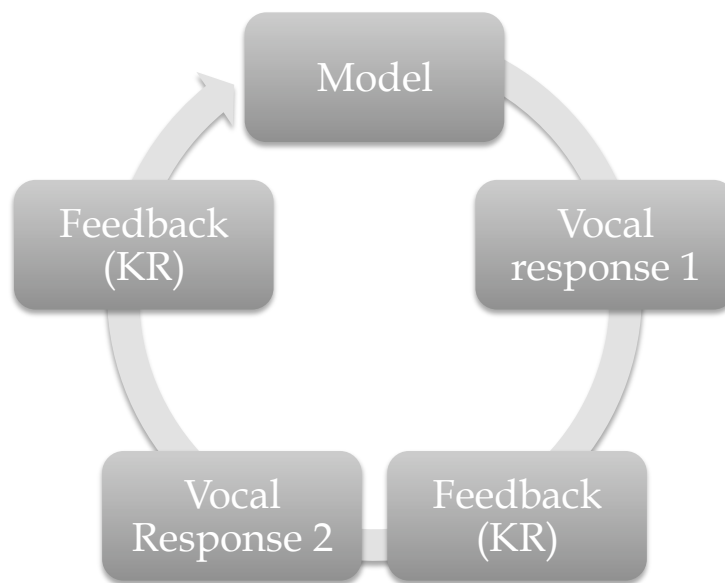
Figure 11: Knowledge of Results Feedback loop (Welch, Howard, Himonides et al., 2005)

Clemmons (2006) notes that pace, attitude and rapid feedback are vital for successful singing lessons. However, recent research into motor learning processes indicates that feedback that directs attention to the *effect* of the action rather than the action itself will be most useful when delivered post-performance–after the singing has finished–as cognitive overload can result in failure of the student to effect positive change (Nisbet, 2010; Welch, et al., 2005; Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014). This accords with current feedback models such as posited by Welch, Howard, Himonides, et al. (2005), where the iterative feedback loop assists with attentional focus on the sensory *output*, not the action itself. Nisbet points out, too, that "attention to sensory information without intentional "doing" supports the singing process" (2010, p. 116), and that learning ABOUT singing and learning TO sing are processes not entirely compatible in the singing lesson. Therefore it might be suggested that the declarative knowledge aspired to in other types of learning is not required in the singing studio when working on vocal technique. This again supports the notion that classical singing training requires the assistance of an expert teacher to develop in the student the implicit motor-

learned knowledge required, alongside attending to the other attributes and dispositions mentioned at the outset of this review.

Modelling a sound quality is a typically used pedagogical strategy to assist with singer learning. Callaghan suggests that hearing may be the most important sense for singers as "auditory feedback allows the singer to match produced sound with intended sound" (2010, p. 23). Nevertheless, given the array of learning styles thought to exist including aural, visual, kinaesthetic, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical and the like (Callaghan, 2010), she recommends singing teachers expand their repertoire of strategies to ensure students of all learning styles are catered to.

Another typical pedagogical strategy is the use of visual imagery through verbal instruction (Callinan-Robertson, Mitchell & Kenny, 2006), where "in both the singing literature and in practice, singers and pedagogues elicit vocal gestures using figurative language to describe vocal quality and to communicate technical instructions" (p. 1). Mason points out that an experienced teacher will use "whatever image and metaphors may occur to him, thus helping the development of a strong yet subtle connection between aural and physical sensations" (2000, p. 210). Given that sensory and metaphoric images are often used in tandem, however, the use of *metaphoric* images to aid learning has not been supported by the research, although *sensory* images have been shown to be beneficial to motor learning (Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014).

A number of singer/researchers have written about the difficulty of developing clear communication strategies for singing instruction (McCoy, 2004; Vennard, 1967; Miller, 1986, 1996; Callaghan, 2000; Mitchell & Kenny, 2006; Thurman & Welch, 2000; Welch et al., 2005; Howard, Welch, Brereton et al., 2004). This research discusses the need for a clear, definable and mutual language that measurably develops sensorimotor skills, based not on metaphoric images but on clear sensory perceptions aligned with acoustic and kinaesthetic targets. Unfortunately this discussion has remained just that, possibly because each singer's sensory output is unique to them, and also perhaps because of the uniqueness of each student's learning approach. Burwell (2006) noted differences in the amount of verbal instruction given to singers when compared with that given to instrumentalists, although no other comparative studies have since investigated these differences. Burwell found more dialogue used to explain technique than interpretation, and that singers were more likely to discuss their health.

In terms of development of artistry and musical expressiveness, Burwell also found singing teachers tended to use metaphor rather than literal vocabulary, and in discussions on interpretation, the dramatic or poetic text appeared to take precedence over the music. Burwell pointed out that due to the embodied nature of the singing voice, its sensitivity to physiological and psychological changes and poetic or dramatic text needing to be understood and internalised before being communicated, that perhaps a vocabulary which

exploits metaphorical, experiential and emotional aspects is a natural progression to the development of an expert performer.

Lesson structure

During her studies into perceptions of instrumental and vocal teachers, Gaunt found that, of lesson structures that most teachers followed a similar tripartite format of greeting and chat about technical issues, some exercises, then work on the repertoire, with vocal teachers adding a "warm-up and technical vocalizing at the start of the lesson" (2008, p. 226). There is little current research on structures in a singing lesson, although Blades-Zeller's study found teachers preferred flexible lesson structures, basing the lesson on the needs or expertise of the student, or on their performance goals (2003). Nevertheless her results indicate classical singing teachers follow the same basic flexible tripartite form as in the Gaunt (2008, 2009) and Zhukov (2004) studies.

Tools

The singing teacher teaches the student how to sing and perform a range of songs and technical exercises in preparation for the assessments using a variety tools that may include video, books and charts on voice and body physiology; computer software that records acoustical properties of the voice in real time, or simple tools such as mirrors, recording devices and musical instruments (O'Bryan, 2007; Chandler, 2014). Other tools include CD or video recordings of music performances by eminent artists (Zhukov, 2004). While contemporary musicians appear to be familiar with the use of modern technology, this does not seem to have flowed through to classical voice, although in a recent article Southcott and Mitchell (2013) recommended the use of recording devices in the studio to aid student learning.

With the rise in the use of smart phones it remains to be seen whether teachers or students make use of these implements to enhance learning, given that the multifarious uses of these phones include recording devices, videos and add-on applications such as metronomes, music tutors and intonation software. While some research has investigated the use of recording devices in conservatoire music studios (Daniel, 2006; Fernandez, n.d.), little research exists that investigates the possibilities of smart phone technology to aid learning in the one-to-one studio (Dwyer & O'Bryan, 2014), mostly because the technology is rapidly changing and the use of technology in the one-to-one classical singing studio is as yet uncharted territory.

Callaghan, Thorpe and van Doorn, (2004), McCoy (2004) and Miller (2008) each have helped create computer software for use in the singing studio and other researchers (Welch et al, 2005; Callaghan, Thorpe and van Doorn, 2004; Howard, Welch, Brereton et al, 2004) have investigated the use of various computer-based aids to measure vocal-output via real-time

feedback in the studio, with varying rates of success. Each of the programs provides a visual measure via spectrogram of the student's vocal output. Once again, however, little research exists to measure the take-up of these tools in singing studios.

Assessment goals and performances

Singing development in the conservatoire is inevitably geared towards preparation for assessment, which provides useful although challenging goals for the student to work towards. Chapman believes that the development of a sound basic vocal technique should be the priority when working with young adult singers and that "the current tertiary system….can work against this unless the teacher is particularly vigilant and actively prioritizes vocal development, helping their students to **build their instrument while simultaneously learning to play it**" (2006, p. xvi).

Research into assessment practices for tertiary classical singers is infrequently found in the literature. Kokotsaki, Davidson, and Coimbra's 2001 study examining the effect of assessment practices (including performance) on singers, found that more able students and those with further development enjoyed singing in performance more than singers in the early years of their tertiary education, suggesting that an embodied instrument that both houses the voice and communicates emotional intent is a complex process and that performance only becomes enjoyable when the basics of vocal technique are adequately mastered. Wrigley (2005) likewise found across all instruments that at least monthly solo and ensemble performance experiences and frequent levels of assessment performance experience were required before an improvement in performance quality was evident.

Rather more research has investigated the effect of performance anxiety, situational stress, and the degree of task mastery on musicians (Kenny & Ackermann, 2009; Lanzisera, 2008; Kenny, 2011), suggesting that performances may be positively or negatively affected by the interaction of these three factors.

The sections above briefly outlined the many pedagogical strategies singing teachers may employ in their studio, plus the tools used, the time management, and goal setting that characterises some of the activities that take place. Following now is an appraisal of classical singing within a culture of singing spanning four hundred years, within a conservatoire culture equally long, and the historical paths from which current classical teaching and learning are derived. Once again the Bronfenbrenner model macrosystem of dominant classical singing ideologies corresponds approximately to this next section.
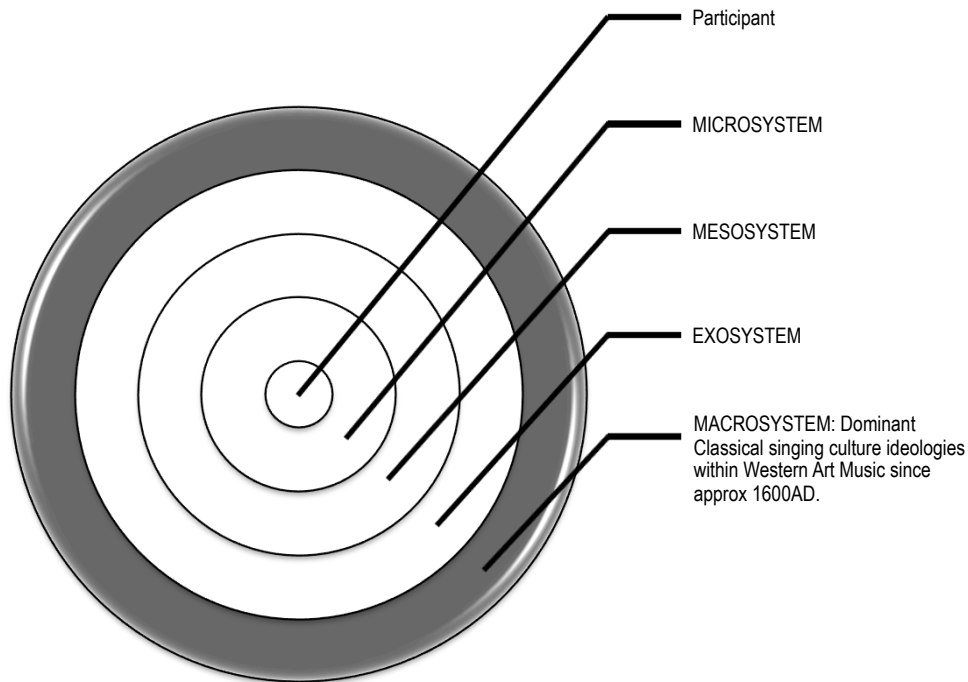
Figure 12: Macrosystem

Cultural psychology and the master / apprentice model

The master/apprentice learning and teaching approach is thousands of years old and at first glance appears an informal education, where "learners spontaneously, or by observation and imitation, internalize a direct replica of the behaviour they see around them" (Lave, 1982, p. 182). However, as Lave noted, "there is considerable structure to the educational process that apprentices go through" (ibid.). Rogoff (1995) notes that this learning approach is frequently seen as dyadic, but argues "apprenticeship as a concept goes far beyond expert-novice dyads; it focuses on a system of interpersonal involvements and arrangements in which people engage in culturally organized activity in which apprentices become more responsible participants" (1995, p. 61). A musical apprenticeship therefore may be seen as a way of learning particular practices, participating in that culture in order to become a member of that culture (Rogoff, 2003), and includes the culture of the conservatoire and the traditions and practices contained within.

In music education, however, the master /apprentice approach is both a mode of teaching and an actual historical educational construct. Burwell (2013) argues that the term master/apprentice is not well articulated in music studies, claiming "the skill acquired through apprenticeship involves both doing and knowing" (p. 279). She notes Callaghan (1998, 2000) partially articulates the concept through the definition of "experiential knowledge" for physical skills development, however Burwell adds "connoisseurship" (Polanyi, 1958), which is the development of tacit knowledge through the master.

Classical singing teaching and learning in this mode might be defined as a "signature pedagogy" (Shulman, 2005), recognisable to its participants and even those outside the

culture as being characteristic of the classical music profession. Signature pedagogy is a type of training where specific pedagogical approaches have been developed over hundreds of years in the professions (law and medicine) and which combine habits of the hand, heart and mind to create a skilled worker trained to think, believe in and perform in ways peculiar to that profession. It is here that Rogoff's (1995) theory of "planes of focus" comes into play, where she claims that *all* learning is a form of apprenticeship and that we move towards mastery through active participation in a culture. She regards apprenticeship, guided participation, and participatory appropriation as "inseparable concepts reflecting different planes of focus in sociocultural activity–community / institutional, interpersonal, and personal" (1995, p. 59).

While apprenticeship falls across all aspects of modern socio-cultural activity, in European musical educational history the actual construct of the medieval guild master and apprentice workshops shaped much of secular music education in subsequent years and has an ongoing influence on the modern music-teacher/student dyad, where conservatoire teachers are seen as both carriers of tradition and innovative artists (Johansson, 2012).

History of the master/apprentice model of education

The master/apprentice tradition of European education is commonly assumed to have emerged from the Middle Ages and the development of the craft guilds, but it was at this point that rules and guidelines of the guilds were made explicit (Sennett, 2008), rather than appearing fully sprung. Sennett writes of the medieval workshop that it "did not follow the rules of a modern family guided by love. Organised into a system of guilds, the workshop provided other, more impersonal emotional rewards" (2008 p. 53). Like many other craft guilds, the music guilds set down strict rules and "principles for the work of the musician, to cultivate a professional ethic and to provide social relief for infirm members and the families of deceased colleagues" (Brainerd Slocum, 1995, p. 258). As with many art and craft guilds, music guilds usually allowed only one apprentice per master, "enabling a greater number of masters to participate in the benefits of apprenticeship and to limit the number of apprentices" (Brainerd Slocum, 1995, p. 269). Haar agrees, noting that "training in instrumental performance was…mostly an individual practice, often a father-son relationship that resembled a guild apprenticeship" (Haar, in Forscher, Weiss & Murray et al, 2010, p. 4).

As the master apprentice tradition continued through the seventeenth century and beyond, Smith writes of apprenticeships in Britain, "ideally, the relationship would be characterized by affection and warmth rather than the formality of the teacher-student relationships or the economic coolness of the employer-employee relationship" (1981, p. 451), but that "sometimes, tension between masters and apprentices was the direct result of as well as cause for harsh punishments and abuse of apprentices" (p. 457).

Role of the master

The master of the guild workshop was the ostensibly autonomous and authoritative knowledge bearer with near complete authority over his apprentices, which was necessary, given the lawless nature of medieval cities. As Sennett points out, "in craftsmanship there must be a superior who sets standards and who trains. In the workshop, inequalities of skill and experience become face-to-face issues. The successful workshop will establish legitimate authority in the flesh" (2008, p. 54).

In the medieval guild there was a three-tiered hierarchy of masters, journeymen and apprentices, in which the first seven years consisted of the apprenticeship. The next five years or so the journeyman had to show "managerial competence and give evidence of his trustworthiness as a future leader"(Sennett, 2008, p. 58). The judgement of the master was final, given his united powers of authority and autonomy. Not all masters were suitable teachers, however, and Smith (1981) reports of several eighteenth century accounts of apprentices who were removed by their families from masters who provided poor working and living conditions and demonstrated abusive or neglectful behaviour.

The absolute power afforded the master was a way of ensuring enduring quality in his product, but also ensuring obedience to the "religious brotherhood" (Kieser, 1989, p. 550) of the guild. In order to maintain the exacting standards of guild membership the master had to demonstrate his apprentices followed strict moral and religious codes and were not innovative, adhering instead to the old ways of doing, rather than to modern concepts and ideas (Smith, 1981). This guaranteed a "looking back" at past practices, which, it has been argued (Persson, 1996; Johnson, 2009; Madsen in Parkes, 2009), is promulgated in applied music training today.

For singers not educated within the extensive European and British choral traditions, the master-apprentice learning tradition was the usual educational path throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. From the middle ages until the late nineteenth century, it was normal practice for emerging singers to be apprenticed for up to twelve years to a singing teacher who was responsible for not only their musical and vocal education, but also their moral and physical development (Rosselli, 1987; Weber, 2014). The master was the conduit through which all music content knowledge, skills and attitudes about singing were passed to the student. A student might be indentured for a number of years to one teacher, but not necessarily in isolation. Students might frequently have an individual lesson, but would also have group lessons with other singers in singing, or theory and counterpoint. This musical content knowledge included the development of music theory, musicianship and history, and skills in stagecraft and performance practice. The master may also have been responsible for the teaching of languages, literacy and numeracy in the young apprentice. The apprentice was fed, housed and taught by the master. Weber (2014, n.p.) notes thereafter as

the student entered the profession, "the teacher served as mentor, indeed as an agent for the young musician".

Development of the conservatoire

As the conservatoire environment developed throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, much music knowledge acquisition previously assigned to the master became the province of the conservatoire, yet the music maestro remained the prime conduit through which music students developed their instrumental and vocal skills, and, arguably, their values and beliefs about music and the music industry. Nevertheless, a culture of learning becomes evident with the expansion of these schools into the traditional master/apprentice domain.

As well as their principal instrument lessons, students at a conservatoire may have had lessons in singing, keyboard, other musical instruments, music history, theory and composition (Arnold, 2014; Kassler, 1972; Potter, 2000, 2006; Rosselli, 1988, 2000; Sands, 1942, 1943, 1944; Sawkins, 1987; Camiz, 1991; Sherr, 1980; Riemann, 1895; Burney, 1959, 1969; Butt, 1994; Rainbow, 1989, Wright, 2005). Rosselli (1988, 2000) notes that the presumed division between music maestro and the conservatoire environment was not explicit: "even within institutions the relationship with the officially appointed teacher was a personal one" (1988, p. 159). In Britain, prior to the establishment of the Royal Academy of Music in 1822, musicians were commonly educated via the craft system master-apprentice-based learning and teaching model (Wright, 2005). This meant the master was responsible for the quality of the education of the apprentice. In some conservatoires the master-apprentice style of teaching enabled students to take on a journeyman role as they advanced in skill, similar to how medieval guilds operated centuries earlier (Arnold, 2010). Nevertheless, abuse of apprentices in the conservatoire was common, Kassler (1972) noting, "while there were many fine teachers of music, there were others who utilized their apprentices in questionable ways– for prostitution or for menial tasks" (p. 219).

The twenty-first century conservatoire

The European conservatoire is the place in which the European musical canon was fixed and even deified, and training musicians for expertise in these particular art forms remains remarkably consistent with the types of training that took place in the master-apprentice traditions of old. Despite popular belief, conservatoire practices throughout the last four centuries have been highly flexible and invariably take on the cultural practices of the country in which the conservatoire operates. However, Johnson claims of the current conservatoire training ground that the practices within are based on

> a complex set of traditions, understandings, cultural and ideological codes,
> practices, and documents... All of these institutions and traditions are deeply,
> deeply entrenched. They are the foundation for most of our conventional

conceptions and practices of musicianship that still remain deeply embedded, despite fundamental changes in every aspect of music making. (2009, p. 18)

To a certain extent Johnson's statement might be right. Nevertheless, conservatoires do appear to be changing with the times, in their teaching approaches of musical development, their content offerings and in their attitudes to student learning and outcomes. Welch, Papageorgi, Haddon, et al., (2008) created a multi-site, multi-method research project titled Investigating Musical Performance, which explored how different groups of musicians learn to perform. Results regarding institutions indicated that "an ideal institutional culture is inspirational, facilitates academic, professional and personal development and fosters a supportive community of learning, whilst allowing the development and pursuit of personal interests", and that "the foundations for a successful performance career are built on students' informal and formal learning experiences, networking, group activities and sustained support for transitions from tutors" (Teaching and Learning Research Briefing Paper, 61, November, 2008).

Conservatoires are faced with providing a broadening curricula that includes such subjects as jazz, world musics, contemporary commercial music, music business subjects, sound engineering and information technology, all designed to meet "the politial, social and economic demands of society through the provision of courses with more vocational or societal relevance" (Bennett, 2008, pp. 59-60). To cite a few examples: the Guildhall in London offers in addition to traditional musical offerings Electronic Music, Jazz, Acting and Theatre studies. Likewise at least a dozen American conservatoriums and music colleges offer Musical Theatre, Contemporary Commercial Music and Jazz streams in addition to the traditional instrumental offerings. Some universities in Australia are now offering degrees in music that are expanding traditional conservatoire practices, such as at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (2014), where Bachelor degrees are offered in Popular Music, Jazz, Musical Theatre and Music Technology. In 2007 Lebler suggested that for current conservatoires to prosper in a changing cultural and economic landscape, learning experiences needed to produce multi-skilled, autonomous and adaptable musicians. He questioned dominant teaching practices such as one-to-one, suggesting alternative approaches to student learning.

Bennett's extensive study of performance-based music education and training similarly reported that "fundamental changes to Australian pre-tertiary music education have increased uncertainty about the appropriateness of tertiary music structure and content for incoming and graduating students"(2008, p. 64). Changes in societal demands continue to impact upon the conservatoire environment in the provision of curricula and courses designed to improve student graduate outcomes. Polifonia (2010)–a network set up to research professional music training in Europe under the Bologna umbrella–found that

conservatoire musicians' work contexts and roles were changing as environment, students' cultural and social backgrounds, content and music styles evolved. Changes to teaching contexts include greater emphasis on student-led learning, informal and group learning, and greater collaboration between staff and disciplines. Nevertheless, Johnson claims, "despite some progressive pockets, most educational institutions in the developed world still teach the older classical skills and conventions exclusively and in isolation from almost anything else" (2009, p. 18).

The master apprentice tradition from which the conservatoire developed may have expanded to encompass a physical environment, academic, teaching and administration staff, students and a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), but at its core the conservatoire and those who enter it still value above nearly all other activities the opportunity for performance-targeted students to learn with and from the expertise of eminent artists and teachers, within various ensembles, master classes and in the one-to-one lesson. This is still the primary function of the conservatoire and its driving force as an institutional culture (Nerland & Hanken, 2004; Burt, Lancaster, Lebler, Carey & Hitchcock, 2007; Johansson, 2012; Perkins, 2012).

The next section discusses the values and beliefs of teachers and students about their conservatoire experiences. This section corresponds approximately to the meso- and exo-systems indicated in the Bronfenbrenner model that shows the culture of learning within the conservatoire.
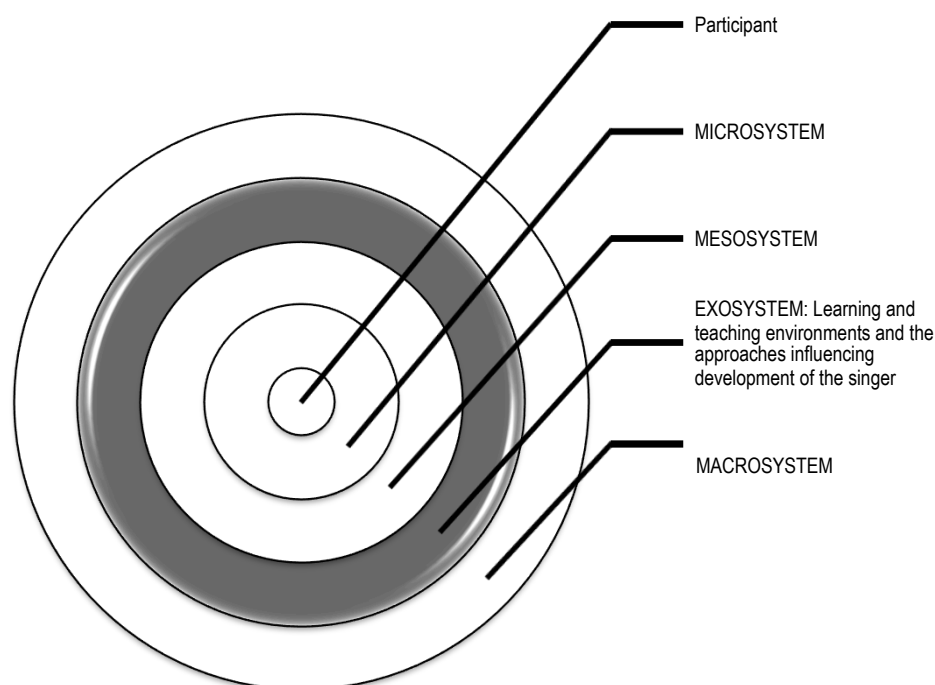
Figure 13: Exosystem

Teacher values and beliefs about conservatoires

The singing teacher, alongside many academic staff, is commonly a peripatetic member of the institution, without an ongoing contract or tenured position, and whose outside interests include performance in their art form. Only a handful of singing teachers in Australia have ongoing full time employment at universities (Presland, 2005; Bennett, 2008; Gaunt, 2008). As a result, many sessional and casual staff teach only their private students and may not have close connections with colleagues. Gaunt's (2009) study confirmed that teachers often felt isolated from their colleagues and lacked the resources to improve their education through professional development opportunities and the like, as did Davidson and Jordan (2007) and Lehmann, Sloboda and Woody (2007).

Nevertheless, Carey and Grant (2014) found that half the teachers in their study would welcome a more collaborative approach between colleagues and that they appreciated diverse learning opportunities for their students. Schindler (2010) also reported that unlike the usual complaint, the "teach as you were taught" adage did not resonate with any of her teacher participants on her study of performers-as-teachers, as they believed their carefully constructed vocal pedagogy was based on three main areas: practical experience, critical reflection and ongoing research (p. 38).

Johansson (2012) found that teachers were paradoxically both keepers of tradition and developers of independent and expansive musicianship, who believed their duties included maintenance of their profession through three main areas: working as a musician, developing craftsmanship and a professional identity, and keeping up traditions (p. 52). Notably, Johansson found that participants showed a "remarkable tendency to downplay the importance of their own personal knowledge and experience. Simultaneously, they refer to their knowledge of and passion for music as individual assets, originating from and embodied in their personal history and experience" (p. 58). Johansson posits that this is a common conservatoire tradition, where musicians rely on their role models for the pedagogical practice and experience they offer.

Teachers also acknowledge the hierarchical organization of the institution where students are perceived in terms of positions of quality and musical hierarchies are "an assumed part of conservatoire life"(Perkins, 2012, p. 205), mirroring the profession with its limited space for star players.

Student values and beliefs about conservatoires

Burt and Mills (2006) found one of the important and positive aspects of music students commencing tertiary studies was the chance to work with their individual teacher. Likewise, a comparative study by Burt, Lancaster, Lebler et al., (2007) found similar aspirations, as well as the desire to work in chamber music ensembles with like-minded peers, to make friends and to develop as a musician. The study also found students aspired to

work as performers or composers, with teaching a rather less enticing option. This is mirrored in the research investigating student perceptions of music teaching (Bennett & Stanberg, 2006; Fredrickson, 2007; Mills, 2004, 2006).

For students within the conservatoire, perceptions of talent and "first rank" (Perkins, 2012) performers were prevalent (Davies, 2004; Kingsbury, 1988), with these studies pointing out the learning space of the conservatoire is one that values talent and performance opportunities above all other. These studies suggest that typical conservatoire social contexts are based on these basic values and beliefs. The same research indicates that while ostensibly offering an egalitarian learning space, conservatoire learning experiences are based instead on a meritocratic hierarchy (Davies, 2004; Perkins, 2012), and that students perceive notions of talent and hard work differently depending on their socio-economic status.

Master classes and group sessions–where performance opportunities commonly take place–are only now being investigated. Creech, Gaunt, Hallam & Robertson (2009) found students considered master classes offered access to a community of practice and were valuable to their learning, while simultaneously reporting performance anxiety a barrier to learning and dubious participatory benefits for the audience. Particularly, Long, Creech, Gaunt and Hallam (2014) found female students more likely than male students to find master classes intimidating, while also reporting positive benefits to instrument-specific classes. Haddon (2014) and Hanken (2014) found that while observational learning in master classes was apparent, students would benefit from guided learning with their teachers to take full advantage of these classes for their own development.

Creech, Papageorgi, Duffy et al (2008) found that, alongside performance opportunities and maintenance of skills, the support of professional colleagues through a peer network and belonging to a community of practice were considered important for transitioning students into the profession, and that mentorship from both teachers and the their music institution helped foster a sense of belonging. Personality traits such as perseverance and adaptability were also seen as important to developing a career in music.

O'Bryan (2010a, 2010b, 2013) found of the Australian conservatoire experience that singing students considered a broad general music education was essential; that singers should learn other languages than English; and that singers should take pedagogy and physiology classes at an undergraduate level. The perception that all musicians should learn how to teach music was not highly regarded, mirroring the findings of Fredrickson (2007) and Mills (2004, 2006). All singers in the study valued highly the opportunity to engage in a range of singing experiences including group lessons, master classes and technique classes, and all singers felt the opportunity to perform in staged productions was essential, although singing in large choral ensembles was considered a little less important as regards vocal development. Interestingly while all singers valued their individual singing lessons, they also valued the opportunity to work with other singing teachers, and they also perceived the

motivational and social value of working in groups or group lessons. They overwhelmingly indicated that they were allowed the opportunity to work with other singing teachers, suggesting that the 'silo' mentality of the private studio was not much in evidence in 2010.

The following section examines more closely the Australian conservatoire and how it is preparing students for a career in classical singing. This section corresponds to the Bronfenbrenner model where the mesosystem of the individual conservatoire intersects with both the participants and the dominant ideologies of the learning and teaching of music over the last four hundred years. While this review does not examine one single conservatoire model it is clear that in Australia a particular conservatoire model emerged specifically for Australian students.
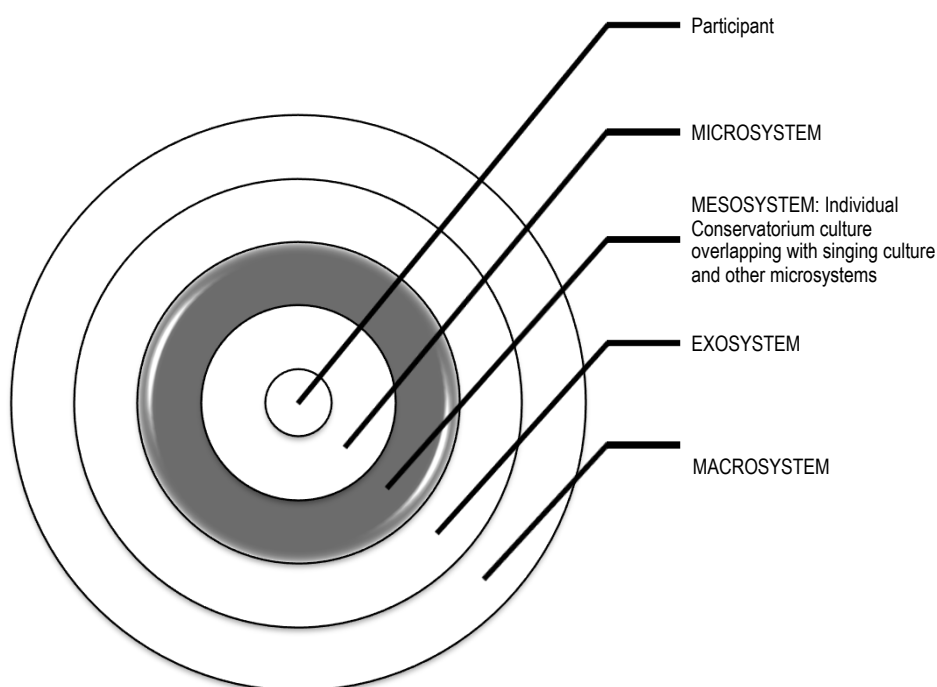
Figure 14: Mesosystem

Australian conservatoires

Australian conservatoires have a history almost as old as some of the great European and British institutions: Melbourne University's first music alumnus graduated in 1879 and the Faculty of Music was originally established as the Conservatorium in 1894 (University of Melbourne, 2014), and Elder Conservatorium in Adelaide soon followed in 1898 (Elder Conservatorium, 2014). Australia follows a basic British model of music education (Carey, 2004), where courses combined "performance tuition similar to that offered in Continental conservatories with studies in theory and composition based on the music degree courses at Oxford and Cambridge' (Bridges, 1970, p. 1). In British conservatoires most instrumental teaching takes place in individual lessons, with occasional class sessions. However in European conservatoires and some other countries "classes generally meet several times a

week, and individual students are taught in the presence of their peers." (Ritterman, 2014, n.p.). The University of Melbourne claims "a comprehensive musical training, quite unlike the purely academic departments of European universities in its balance of practical skills and theoretical knowledge, became a characteristic of the University of Melbourne course from the outset" (University of Melbourne, 2014, n.p.). Thus, at the University of Melbourne, a combination of learning models was adapted for use in Australia as early as 1894, alongside other universities and conservatoires consolidating their music faculties at that time, including the Elder Conservatorium in South Australia (1898), and later the Sydney Conservatorium (1916).

In Australia in 2014, one-to-one applied lessons for classical musicians are still commonplace in most music institutions (University of Queensland, 2014; Australian National Academy of Music, 2014; Monash University, 2014; Sydney Conservatorium, 2014; University of WA, 2014), and this teaching and learning context has remained at the core of expert music performance development since the establishment of the first Australian conservatoire. One-to-one lessons, ensembles, and performance classes are usually available to singing undergraduates and they may or may not have the choice of studying languages, stagecraft and other instruments, alongside aural, theory and history subjects (Roennfeldt, 2012; Schindler, 2014). The current model for classical vocal undergraduate education is between ten to thirteen hour-long individual singing lessons per semester, over some three to four years, supplemented by performance master-classes, coachings and workshops. Known as the major practical study in most tertiary institutions, the hours devoted to this are less than in most other world conservatoires (Treganza, 2007), where minimum one-to-one teaching hours are fifteen per semester at Cologne, and up to forty hours at Juilliard. Within the major practical study, students may be assessed via formative assessment processes such as performances in master classes. Students are also assessed by summative assessment, usually once or twice a year via performance recitals, which may be split into technical and repertoire components, or major performance opportunities, such as opera productions. Some courses include a written element in their assessment processes, such as a reflective journal, essay, or program notes for their recital (Roennfeldt, 2012; Schindler, 2014). Other courses in a music degree include attendance in music ensembles within the overall grade. Preparation for assessment defines much of the focus within the individual singing lesson.

Threats to one-to-one music training

Conservatoires and music institutions both in Australia and internationally are facing proposed changes to governmental policy, which may impact on the delivery of services to music students in higher education, particularly in the provision of one-to-one instrumental and vocal lessons. In Europe, the Bologna Declaration was signed in 1999 concerning Higher Education, which includes the training of musicians. According to Polifonia (2010), the changes are occurring within the context and assumption that "the learning process in Higher

Music Education centres on the personal and artistic development of the student. For most conservatoire students, 1-to-1 learning and teaching is of paramount importance for this development" (Tuning Educational Structures in Europe, 2010), which places one-to-one lessons at the heart of the development of the professional musician. Lennon and Reid (2012), however, warn that collaboration between stakeholders at local, national and international levels are required if common goals around higher music education are to be addressed.

In the UK, funding policy for conservatoires states "the government-funded conservatoires that receive premium funding must, in order to retain this funding, demonstrate that at least 75% of their graduates have careers primarily based in music", which places enormous pressure on the part of conservatoires and music institutions to provide evidence of positive graduate outcomes (Bennett & Stanberg, 2006), and necessitating the development of a range of initiatives that "involves close scrutiny of professional career pathways and the adoption of training models that promise optimum success in the real world of music" (Smith, 2007, p. 2). Conservatoire practices may be affected by these changes to funding policies.

In Australia, reasons other than purely financial ones are also apparent for changes in curriculum and course content. Latufeku (2009) reported on modifications to the music faculty at her regional Australian tertiary institution, which saw dwindling numbers of enrolments in music performance threaten the existence of music performance courses at The University of Wollongong. Rather than close the entire music performance course, "a decision was made to amalgamate singing into the drama department"(p. 130). She noted that her most difficult task "was to challenge some of the established norms that had been part of the author's own training as a singer and were still being promulgated in conservatoriums around Australia" (p. 131).

Australian Higher Education is currently under scrutiny. In May 2014, in a shock announcement to Australian Higher Education, the Australian Government proposed legislation that, amongst other changes, would reduce funding per new student per year by nearly AU$3000 to Funding Tier 3, which houses the Performing Arts (code 1001) (Australian Government, 2014). Universities Australia in response expressed their disappointment that "the Government contribution to course fees will fall by an average of 20 per cent and the government payment will be indexed at a lower rate based on CPI" (Universities Australia, 2014, n.p.). Possible ramifications of this proposed legislation include increasing the cost of education per student contribution to make up the shortfall. This may be beyond the capacity of some students, particularly musicians, for whom a secure income is not guaranteed after graduation (Bennett, 2008; Bennett & Stanberg, 2006). Another ramification may be to reduce further the provision of courses in personnel-intensive courses such as instrumental and voice education as has already happened in some conservatoires.

Yet, for all this uncertainty, findings from international research in one-to-one lessons underpin the long-held belief that "the one-to-one model of instrumental and vocal tuition plays a valuable, even irreplaceable, role in the training of professional musicians" (Carey & Grant, 2014, p. 1). For the time being it seems that one-to-one teaching will remain at the core of conservatoire teaching and learning practices in Australia. This is despite the assumptions about how "best to impart a certain body of knowledge and know-how" (Shulman, 2005, p. 55) to musicians being significantly challenged in Australian music institutions.

Conservatoire teaching approaches have been entrenched in centuries old practices that are seemingly resistant to innovation, yet ongoing changes to conservatoire environments are causing a rethink in the many ways music is taught, and from observations of the participants themselves, it seems apparent from a socio-historical perspective that change is occurring both within and without the conservatoire (Rogoff, 2003). Nevertheless, the conservatoire is a place that has helped perpetuate a "signature pedagogy" (Shulman, 2005) in singing and instrumental teaching, with codes of practice and behaviours recognisable to those within its walls. The master-apprentice one-to-one approach within the conservatoire is still valued as a rich, powerful avenue for student learning. However, through a critical reflection on current music practices and with a more collaborative approach to learning cultures (Perkins, 2012) by its stakeholders–teachers, administrators and students alike, the culture of the conservatoire will yet again adapt to changing market-place priorities, as it has invariably done over the four centuries of its existence.

Summary

Rogoff writes, "*humans develop through their changing participation in the socio-cultural activities of their communities, which also change*" (2003, p. 11). A cultural-psychology perspective of classical singing heritage, the conservatoire environment and its participants enables us to see that, although classical singing teaching and learning has a long master-apprentice tradition seemingly perpetuated in today's conservatoires, innovations and changes are inevitable. The dominant cultural ideology of the past four hundred years cannot easily be dropped. Instead, new pathways are maintaining the traditions of old while embracing new learning cultures. Far from being a static, non-developing custom, it appears that singing teaching and learning practices are being shaped by advances in voice science, in changes in music making, societal challenges and by changes within the participants themselves. Johansson's (2012) paradoxical concept of teachers as both keepers of tradition and innovators suggests that far from adhering to old ways, music teachers are becoming critically reflexive about their approaches to teaching as Schön's (1983) concept of the reflective practitioner indicates, and that conservatoires are also reflecting on their learning cultures (Perkins, 2012) in their inevitable need to adapt to a changing socio-cultural fabric.

Nevertheless, the authority of the master is still valued in the conservatoire by staff and students alike, because the authoritative master remains, even now in the twenty-first

century, the expert from whom novices can develop their craft and the mentor to whom the young professional can look to for advice as they develop their craft in the workplace. While the conservatoire culture has expanded the traditional master-apprentice dyad to encompass all those learning and teaching within its walls, within a range of learning opportunities, the expertise of the master performer and teacher is still valued within a learning environment which values excellence in music making above all else. Given that this is what students hope to develop as they enter the conservatoire, Polanyi's (1958) assertion about the master and apprentice is perhaps understandable:

> To learn by example is to submit to authority. You follow your master because you trust his manner of doing things even when you cannot analyse and account in detail for its effectiveness. By watching the master and emulating his efforts in the presence of his example, the apprentice unconsciously picks up the rules of the art, including those which were not explicitly known to the master himself. These hidden rules can be assimilated only by a person who surrenders himself to that extent uncritically to the imitation of another. A society which wants to preserve a fund of personal knowledge must submit to tradition. (1958, p. 55)

This acknowledgement of the authority of the master in *implicitly* transmitting the craftsmanship of the art form as well as the attributes and dispositions required for a career in the profession may go some way to explaining his or her continuing authority and the persistence of a four hundred-years old tradition in singing education practices, even as the culture of the conservatoire is now adapting its learning cultures for the future.

This review examined several aspects of classical singing culture, its participants and the conservatoire, beginning firstly with a socio-cultural assay of the singing student and teacher's position within Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model (1979). The review then examined classical singing through the lens of cultural psychology, the formation of identity of the classical singer and the embodiment of the singing voice as agent of self-hood. Attention then turned to the relationships of singers throughout the early life cycle prior to attending the conservatoire. The connection of singing teaching and learning to cultural psychological theories was further articulated through a discussion of the values and beliefs regarding attributes and dispositions and tacit knowledge of the classical singer and teacher. With the emphasis on people working together on developing skills, literature on relationality and rapport in the tertiary one-to-one music lesson and the communities and cultures in which the singer develops their cultural identity was appraised. Values and beliefs about singing teaching and learning were examined through both historical and current perspective. Singing pedagogy was then examined in its historical context and current research, with attention being given to the perceptual and feedback needs of singing students.

Finally, the construct of the master-apprentice was then examined and linked to historical and modern conservatoire environments.

Several gaps in the literature emerged. There is still very little research that examines actual pedagogical practices of singing teachers in the one-to-one lesson in the twenty-first century. Current literature reveals the commonly held complaint that teachers teach in the same way that they themselves were taught but in singing pedagogy there is no real evidence that this is the case. While voice science informs singing pedagogy there is once again little evidence to indicate how the teacher in the studio uses such information.

Another gap in the literature is information about the undergraduate singing student and how their values, beliefs and practices are shaped by the culture of the conservatoire, and how conservatoires are perceived to prepare singers for a career in the profession. This study was created in response to these perceived omissions in the literature.

Chapter Three. Method

Introduction

This qualitative study examined the values, beliefs and practices of three eminent singing teachers and their students engaged in classical singing education in Australian tertiary music institutions. The project sought to illuminate personal beliefs and values about classical singing education and to identify how these beliefs and values inform participant learning and teaching approaches.

In seeking to understand these phenomena, the study addressed two research questions:

1. What are participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons?
2. How do participant values and beliefs inform their practices?

As the study is concerned with investigating the participants' personal experiences and approaches to classical singing learning and teaching within tertiary institutions, I selected collective case study as the research strategy. In this chapter the methodology and theoretical rationale for adopting such an approach is discussed, followed by an explanation of the two phases of implementation and the data generation tools utilised. This chapter describes the participants and their environments and the rationale for their inclusion in the study. The processes used in analysing, organising, and presenting the data are then explained. Issues of ethical considerations, trustworthiness and limitations of the study are addressed and the chapter concludes with an introduction to the three narrative chapters followed by a brief chapter summary.

The project was a two-phase collective case study. Dividing the study into two phases is a recommended convention in many methods texts (Creswell, 2007; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012) and ensures clarity between phases, particularly in studies with extended time lines. The first phase consisted of data generation with three eminent singing teachers at three separate Australian institutions and one each of their singing students, through multiple interviews and videoed observations of singing lessons and collection of other artefacts. The second phase consisted of three stages of analysis. This included an extended video analysis using narrative inquiry methods, presentation of the cases using narrative inquiry methods in three narrative accounts, and a discussion chapter using case study methods as the analysis approach. Figure 15 shows how the study was organised.

Phase Two

- 3 collective case studies
- 1 teacher; 1 undergraduate student
- Separate institutions
- Several data generation events:
  - 1: Pre-interviews transcribed
  - 2: 8-10 videoed singing lessons
  - 3: Email interview responses
  - 4: Post-interviews transcribed
  - 5: Secondary artefacts

- 3 analysis stages:
  - 1: Video data analysis through a narrative inquiry approach
  - 2: Narrative accounts created of each case using several data events
  - Recursive, inductive narrative analysis
  - Accounts member-checked for triangulation and confirmation of findings
  - 3: Discussion chapter distilling narrative account findings

Phase One

Figure 15: Phases of study implementation

Theoretical paradigm

The underpinning of qualitative research is that it is "a moral, allegorical, and therapeutic project" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p. xvi) and that qualitative research is "the avowed humanistic commitment to study the social world from the perspective of the interacting individual" (ibid.). The methodology for this project is situated within a social constructivist paradigm. Social constructivism forms the core of my ontological and epistemological beliefs and this paradigm shaped the theoretical framework and study design. According to Schwandt, the social constructivist paradigm posits that

> human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as construct or make it. We invent concepts, models, and schemes to make sense of experience, and we continually test and modify these constructions in the light of new experience…We do not construct our interpretations in isolation but against a backdrop of shared understandings, practices, language, and so forth. (2000, p. 197)

Social constructivists "view inquiry as value-bound rather than value-free" (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012, p. 28) and assert that "individuals develop subjective meanings of their own personal experience, and … this gives way to multiple meanings" (p. 29).

Reality, according to Lincoln and Guba (2000) is "relative, multiple, socially constructed and ungoverned by natural laws" (in Constantino, 2008, p. 116). Creswell writes that social constructivist researchers

> believe that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences…these meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas. (2014, p. 9)

In the research *approaches* of social constructivists, Creswell explains that constructivist researchers

> often address the processes of interaction between individuals. They also focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants…the researcher's intent is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world…inquirers generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning. (ibid.)

Gergen and Gergen (2008, p. 816) further note that "in qualitative research, social construction brings into specific focus three significant relationships: the researcher's relationships with the subjects of research, with the audience, and with society more generally." Inquiry within this paradigm is frequently iterative and recursive, and insights and understanding frequently "emerge from the joint construction of inquirer and participant" (Constantino, 2008, p. 116.).

This project investigated the values, beliefs and practices of classical singing teachers and their students within a tertiary music-training environment and how they mutually constitute, employing the theoretical lens of cultural psychology. Therefore the project design needed to align with both the theoretical paradigm of social constructivism and the theoretical lens of cultural psychology. Collective case study is ideally positioned within the research paradigm of social constructivism.

Collective case study

Collective case study was selected as the methodological approach. In collective case study a number of cases are studied to understand how a particular issue is encountered across a variety of settings (Stake, 1995). Flyvbjerg (2011) uses the Merriam-Webster 2009 definition of case study, which he considers "commonsensical" (2011, p. 302):

Case Study: An intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment.

Flyvbjerg identifies several factors to this definition, including that as a researcher selecting the individual unit and "the setting of its boundaries" (p. 301), "you are not so much making a methodological choice as a choice of what is to be studied" (ibid). Flyvbjerg also notes the definition includes the term "intensive", stating that case studies thus comprise "more detail, richness, completeness and variance" (ibid.). He also notes the stress on developmental factors, in which the case may be evolving in time with a range of interrelated events. Finally, he points out this definition focuses "on 'relation to environment'–that is, "context" (ibid.). Case study aligns well with the theoretical lens of cultural psychology, as there are commonalities of foci between the methodology and theory, in which both cultural psychology theories and case study methods explore socio-cultural interactions within contexts, environments and cultures.

Stake (1995) identifies three main types of case study: instrumental, intrinsic, and collective. Intrinsic case studies are primarily interested in understanding the individual case. Instrumental case studies focus on how the case facilitates understanding of a particular phenomena or central issue. Collective case studies are where a number of cases are studied to examine an issue across a variety of settings. Stake reports, "in qualitative case study, we seek greater understanding of the case. We want to appreciate the uniqueness and complexity of it, its embeddedness and interactions with its contexts" (1995, p. 16). While Stake refers to three case types, Yin (2004) refers instead to two: single case study or multiple case studies, in which he suggests multiple cases may provide "*replications* of each other, deliberate and contrasting comparisons, or hypothesized variations" (p. 6). It was not the purpose of this study to hypothesize variations or be exact replications across the three cases. Rather, this study was an opportunity to examine classical singing teaching and learning relationships across a variety of settings, as in Stake's definition of collective case study. Each case is interesting for its own sake, not as a comparison with others. In either definition of the types, nevertheless, Yin agrees that "compared to other methods, the strength of the case study method is its ability to examine, in-depth, a "case" within its "real-life" context (Yin, 2004, p. 1).

Stake (2000) advocates that comparisons between cases should not be the primary function of the research as it is "actually competing with learning about and from the particular case" (p. 444) and Flyvbjerg (2006) concurs, commenting "often it is not desirable to summarize and generalize case studies" (p. 241). Nevertheless, Riessman claims, "theorizing across a number of cases by identifying common thematic elements across research participants, the events they report, and the actions they take is an established tradition with a long history in qualitative inquiry" (2008, p. 74). Therefore collective case study was the

approach chosen for this project, in which "each case study is instrumental to learning…but there will be important coordination about the individual studies" (Stake, 1995, p. 4).

Flyvbjerg (2006) noted five common misunderstandings about case–study analysis and created five counterarguments to discuss issues of case-study trustworthiness and credibility. First, case studies produce context-dependent knowledge. "Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals" (p. 224). Second, carefully chosen experiments and cases, coupled with critical reflexivity, are responsible for major developments in scientific knowledge. Third, examining atypical cases is often necessary to extend a theory about a general problem. Fourth, case studies can examine every-day situations in social settings, the advantage here being on the depth, not breadth of a case: "the case study contains no greater bias toward verification of the researcher's preconceived notions than other methods of inquiry. On the contrary, experience indicates that the case study contains a greater bias toward falsification of preconceived notions than toward verification" (p. 237). Finally, Flyvbjerg noted, case studies focus attention on the narrative detail, the richness and complexity of the experience: "often it is not desirable to summarize and generalize case studies. Good studies should be read as narratives in their entirety" (p. 241). Flyvbjerg noted in his follow-up chapter in the Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research in 2011, "despite the difficulty or undesirability in summarizing certain case studies, the case study as such can certainly contribute to the cumulative development of knowledge" (p. 313).

Case study was selected for this project because of the insight gained into the one-to-one tertiary classical singing learning and teaching approach within the socio-cultural phenomenon of the conservatoire. Individual interactions and how they mutually constitute within the conservatoire is well positioned in a collective case study framework.

Research participants

Each case study contained two purposefully sampled participants: an eminent, expert singing teacher and their current undergraduate singing student. The three cases were separately conducted in two Australian capital city conservatoriums and one was conducted at a regional university.

The institutions themselves were not the primary focus of the study, although in qualitative research environment plays a central role in the lives of the study participants. Therefore, the aim was to first recruit the eminent teachers and from there the student participants and settings would be determined.

Recruitment

Eminent teachers

First to be selected for recruitment were the singing teacher participants, all of whom were known to me at the time of the original proposal. Two of the teachers are known through professional channels, and the third is a personal acquaintance. The teachers were selected according to four main criteria: on their eminence as singing teachers and performers, and on their expertise and experience as singing teachers.

Expertise, according to Gruber (2001, p. 5146) "denotes the outstanding performance of an individual in a particular domain (e.g., medicine, physics, chess, music). 'Experts' thus are persons who, by objective standards and over time, consistently show superior performance in typical activities of a domain". Expertise is "usually considered as acquired special skill in or knowledge of a particular subject through practical experience" (ibid.). The acquisition of expertise also has a sociocultural element, in that "experts share particular evaluative criteria for assessing performances in their domain of expertise; their acquired knowledge and skills have a sociocultural origin; and an increase in cognitive competence is often accompanied by a fuller participation in the community of practitioners" (Hatano and Oura, 2001, p. 3174), suggesting that as one's expert skill in a domain increases, so does one's eminence within the community in which one is practising.

The singing teachers were identified as being employed through the university system on a full time contract at the time of the initial invitation, a rarity in Australian tertiary education (Callaghan, 2000; Bennett, 2008). Each has teaching experience spanning more than twenty years, with two teachers in positions of seniority at their institutions. Each teacher has had a substantial and successful career in singing performance and is well known by his or her peers within the singing community for their contribution to classical singing. Each of the teachers possesses substantial performance portfolios and published recordings. Each has held positions of prominence either within the university system or in the singing community. All three have published in research journals or singing publications and at the time of the data generation one teacher possessed a doctorate and the other two were doctoral candidates, with one achieving their doctorate during the study.

Two of the teachers are women in their fifties. The other is a man in his early forties. The age of these teachers is important as developing expert skill in classical singing and teaching takes time, as any domain skill demands (Ericsson, 2004, Berliner, 2001). Gaunt's (2008) study found that the one-to-one musicians at her institution came to teaching after an extended period of a well-regarded performance career and Davidson (2007) has commented on the same phenomenon. Therefore the teachers in the study may be considered expert teachers through their long experience as respected professional performers, and through their long experience and ongoing maintenance of professional skills in singing teaching. Coincidentally, their experience of undertaking graduate studies may well have contributed to their willingness to be involved in the study, although this was not explicitly stated at any time.

Originally the plan was to contact each teacher via university gatekeeper requests, almost as a cold-call type arrangement, however, a personal approach became necessary for the study to proceed. Each teacher was approached individually prior to seeking gatekeeper approval. As there was a personal connection to each of the teachers, they also knew of the study and there was some interest generated about what the study sought to investigate. In each case the teachers expressed a willingness to be involved in the study and were remarkably open and enthusiastic about taking part. As one participant noted, there is so little information about learning and teaching relationships in the one-to-one classical singing studio that they were happy to contribute to new knowledge.

Once initial interest from each teacher had been gained, gatekeeper approval was sought and awarded from each respective higher education faculty (see Appendix One). Following an introductory email describing the study, formal letters of invitation were then sent to each of the singing teachers, and the project was then discussed in some detail with each participant.

All ethical considerations were made clear to the institutions and the teachers in both written and verbal form. Teachers were invited to discuss the project at any time before and after commencement, and were advised of their rights regarding continuation of the study. Ethical approval and other considerations regarding participant rights including member checking are explained in detail later in the chapter.

Students

Teachers were asked to nominate one current undergraduate student to their Head of School. The only limit to their selection of undergraduate student was that the student not be in first year, so that intimations of coercion might be reasonably addressed. This was an important component of the study design, as there was concern that new undergraduates might not feel empowered (Enns, 2004) to make choices about whether to take part in such an intimate and potentially revealing study. The concern did extend to older students also, but it was felt that second year students or above have usually developed a relationship with their teacher where they can make empowered choices about whether to become involved.

Teachers each coincidentally selected female students in the second year of their undergraduate studies, because they each individually felt their third year students already had sufficient pressure on them to complete the year (and degree) successfully without adding another potentially stressful event to their calendars. One student was twenty-five years old at the commencement of the study. The second student was eighteen and the third student was twenty. I was not privy to the selection process between teacher and student, and many students may have been approached prior to the final recruitment. However, each of the teachers informed me there were only a few second year undergraduate students suitable for recruitment. It was practical to ask the teachers to do the recruiting, given they had an

already existing relationship with that student and could more reasonably know whether the student might be interested and willing to take part.

Once the students were recruited, the teachers gave them information packages and informed consent forms to sign. Once email addresses and phone numbers were provided, I then talked with the students about the project. At all times, students were made aware of their rights regarding their involvement in the study, both in verbal and written form.

As the teachers had carte blanche over the recruitment process, I suspected they would probably select the brightest and best of their undergraduate students. One teacher, Deborah, acknowledged this. In Clarice's studio, Phoebe was her only second-year undergraduate student at that time. The third teacher, Mark, was bound by some extenuating circumstances preventing him from selecting his preferred student, so he then recruited the only remaining second-year student available and willing to take part. This resulted in outcomes unforseen at the commencement of the project and is explored in *Case Study Two: A way forward.*

Research Design

The following section explains the creation of data generation events, the chronology in which they took place and the rationale for their use.

Case Study Research Design

Each case study consisted of one individual eminent teacher and their current undergraduate second year singing student. There were three cases in total. Each case took place in a different institution around Australia. The research design consisted of five distinct stages:

1. A preliminary individual semi-structured interview was held with each teacher and each student, concerning life experiences in singing and singing teaching and learning. All interviews were confidential and no contents revealed to the other participants.

2. Teachers filmed a series of between eight and ten singing lessons with their student over one semester.

3. An email interview schedule was sent to each participant midway through the semester. Again, all responses were confidential and not transmitted to other participants.

4. An individual video-prompted interview was held with each participant approximately one year after the observations, in which they were invited to reflect on the learning and teaching transactions that took place. The video data shown to the teacher and student of each case study was the same however the responses from each were confidential and not transmitted to other participants.

5. Participants were invited to member-check their own interview transcripts and narrative accounts and to become active members in the research process.

Data generation events

There were a number of data generation events in this study. Of this approach to data generation, Greene (2007) claims, "better understanding of the multifaceted character of educational and other social phenomena can be obtained from the use of multiple approaches and ways of knowing" (p. 20). Denzin and Lincoln name this ad-hoc data generation 'Bricolage', in which "the researcher as *bricoleur*-theorist works between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 6). The "bricoleur" is a "maker of quilts", who "uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods and empirical materials are at hand" (p. 5).

There were five main data generation events. These were two semi-structured interviews per participant; field notes and written reflections; collection of university artefacts and emails; up to ten hours of video observations per case; and secondary incidental data such as concert events and newspaper reviews. Precedence for the case-study design can be found in Barrett's (2006) study of *"Creative Collaboration": An "Eminence" Study of Teaching and Learning in Music Composition*, where a similar study design was employed. In this study multiple views and meanings and the complexity of views "formed through interaction with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives" (Creswell, 2007, p. 21) were deliberately sought to provide richness and added verification of the findings. The data events are explained below.

Interviews

Two interviews were scheduled for the participants of each case study, one before and one after the singing lesson observations.

Interview One

Each participant took part in a individual, semi-structured audio-recorded interview prior to filming the singing lessons, in order to access beliefs and values and expectations in relation to voice teaching and learning. Through interviews, individuals are engaged in "describing their experiences and self-understanding, and clarifying and elaborating their own perspective on their lived world" (Kvale, 1996, p. 105).

Questions were specifically designed to elicit storied accounts of the participants' lives and experiences in singing (Riessman, 2008), and as Kvale notes, "in qualitative interviews, social scientists investigate varieties of human experience. They attempt to understand the world from the subjects' points of view and to unfold the meaning of their lived world" (Kvale, 2006, p. 481). The initial interview lasted between one and two hours

and included participant life stories (Atkinson, 2007) and context-specific accounts about singing and singing teaching practices with both their current singing teacher and former teachers. Samples of the interview schedules are in Appendix Two. Interviews were then transcribed and sent to the participants for member checking prior to using them in the analysis.

The semi-structured interview schedule was developed from a number of studies in music education including those of Abeles (1975); Sosniak (1985); Bloom (1985); Clemmons (2007); Gaunt (2008, 2009); Burt and Mills (2006); Davidson (2004); Presland (2005); Lebler, Burt and Carey (2009), and Burt, Lancaster, Lebler, Carey and Hitchcock (2007) and investigated musical identity, motivation to learn music, and the attitudes and perceptions of students and teachers regarding learning and teaching relationships and pedagogical approaches.

Questions regarding the relationship between student and teacher were informed primarily by theorists in motivational psychology, Deci and Ryan (1986, 2000, 2006). Their theory: Self Determination Theory, posits that concepts of competence, autonomy and relatedness have been aligned with notions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, needs and goals pursuits. Deci and Ryan claim: "social contexts supportive of the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness: (a) maintain or enhance intrinsic motivation; (b) facilitate the internalization and integration of extrinsic motivation resulting in more autonomous motivational or regulatory orientations; and (c) promote or strengthen aspirations or life goals that ongoingly provide satisfaction of the basic needs" (2000, p. 263). As noted in the literature, singing teachers may have a substantial role to play in the health and well being of their singing students and a positive learning and teaching relationship appears to play a fundamental role in learning to sing.

Interview Two

The second interview series explored individual belief and self-understanding and interrogated interpretations that arose from the observation data. Individual video-recorded interviews with all of the participants took place nearly a year after the initial interviews and lasted between one and two hours. Excerpts of the singing lessons were shown to each participant to elicit further discussion about pedagogical insights and approaches to teaching and learning singing (Rowe, 2009), and to interrogate my interpretations of the events.

Participants were invited to reflect upon their progress since the time of the videos and about current circumstances surrounding their relationship in the dyad. Interviews were semi-structured and contained prompt questions to elicit participant reflections on the teaching and learning processes taking place, including their values and beliefs about the pedagogical and interpersonal practices taking place. Examples of the interview schedules and questions are provided in Appendix Two.

Singing lesson observations

The participants were provided with a digital camcorder to record a series of up to ten sixty-minute one-to-one singing lessons with each dyad. The strategy was selected as an "unobtrusive means by which the interactions between the teacher and student can be observed without the possible contamination of behaviours through reaction to the researchers' presence" (Ratcliff, 2003, from Barrett and Gromko, 2007, p. 216). The length of this study design ensured that long-term developments in communication, relationship and pedagogic skills could be observed. This added richness and depth to the study.

The teachers and students were given carte blanche over the placement of the cameras and recording of the lessons, which I hoped would have a two-fold effect. The first was that teachers and their students would be empowered to make choices about the videos that would enable feelings of trustworthiness in the research process. The second was that by empowering the participants to select the recording and placement of the cameras, these actions enabled them to become, in part, active members of the research process from data generation through to data presentation. One of the teachers chose to be off camera for most of the video series, which was a source of some frustration, but respecting the privacy and goodwill of the teacher was more important than seeing the interactions from both participants. The audio recording of the teacher was clear and given the teacher spent much time playing the keyboard, reasonably reliable judgements could be made about the interactions taking place.

The other two teachers chose to be on camera, usually from a distance where both teacher and student could be easily seen. This distance had a positive bearing on the sound quality of the footage as in several cases the singing was very loud and a close camera position would have distorted the speakers in the video cameras. As it happened the speaker quality of the videos was surprisingly good and relatively uncompressed. This enabled many nuances in the singing of each participant to be heard, including formant shaping and technical development of each student.

Post "remote observation", I interviewed each teacher and student separately in a video-prompted confidential interview approximately one year later, to reflect upon the outcomes arising from the lesson series and to provide additional information by which the observation data could be examined. Short excerpts from the lesson series of that case study were shown to the participants, prompting discussion and reflection of the footage regarding various relational and pedagogical events. The video excerpts were the same for each participant in that case study.

Artefacts

Email interviews

An email interview was sought with participants partway through the same semester as the filmed lesson series, in which they were invited to record written responses to a series of questions, to enable further written reflection on current teaching and learning practices in the lesson series. The interview schedules are provided in Appendix Two.

Email communication was useful in ensuring participants had continuing engagement with the data generation, and it enabled their written responses to be added to the data pool. While the students provided rather cursory detail about their singing lesson experiences, the teachers provided rich, descriptive accounts of the progress of their students through extended written responses, which added depth and additional information to the data pool.

University web sites

The tertiary music institutions involved in the study all have websites with publically available information regarding course requirements, staffing and general information. Hence I was able to access their websites in order to generate further interpretations of the data provided by student participants about courses and the subjects available in their music degrees. The information was used to reflect on the interface between the public face of the university and the private interactions of its members, and to triangulate the information and perceptions of the participants.

Incidental secondary data

Concerts and recorded performances

There were opportunities to hear some of the student participants sing in performances beyond the scope of the project. These performances were both live and recorded, and notes were made about the vocal and performance development of the students. I have included one of the performances as a vignette in the storying of one of the narratives.

News articles and reviews

At least one of the students has been reviewed by national broadcasters and the reviews are readily available online. These enabled me to see how the students are progressing and how a wider audience appraises their performances. I have included commentary about their career progress as a summary vignette to provide closure to the narrative accounts, in accordance with the storying element of narrative analysis.

Analysis

Analysis of the cases took place in three stages over a substantial time period and utilised two approaches. In the first stage I selected and analysed excerpts from the video data over the course of a year, using narrative inquiry methods. In the second stage, a year later, I created drafts of three narrative accounts, utilising data from the interviews, video analyses (explained further in the next section), and other artefacts. Employing a narrative inquiry approach, the accounts were refined and reworked over a prolonged period of time. For the third stage I created a discussion chapter to analyse the findings from the completed narrative accounts, using case study analysis approaches. The discussion chapter distilled the findings into three main characteristics from which five themes common across all cases emerged. The rationale for using two analysis approaches was based on my epistemological stance, social constructivist theories, and a desire to further analyse the findings in each narrative account according to the substantive theory explored in the literature review.

Analysis stage one: Video analysis framework

Each video series was treated as a discrete case but the approach to analysis was the same for each. Using a narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin, Murphy, Huber & Orr, 2010), in which tensions between competing and conflicting stories are used as a "key methodological strategy" (p. 83), various moments and events in the videos became "interim starting points" (ibid.) for focused inquiry at that point.

Each dyad had filmed eight or more hour-long singing lessons. I repeatedly viewed all videos of each dyad and took extensive notes that examined dialogic and relational processes between teacher and student in the course of pedagogical singing instruction, including gesture and movement. Common guiding selection across each of the cases included the observation of patterns and sequences of events in a lesson, allocation of events, identification of relationship markers and the linking of these events to the research questions. Points of interest and tension were time coded and a range of musical, vocal and pedagogic elements were examined at those points. Substantial notes were made about the pedagogical and relational interactions at each point of tension and interest.

Selection of the video excerpts for analysis became the focus of the research for more than a year. In each video series, there were any number of learning and teaching transactions that could have been equally useful for analysis as the ones eventually chosen. Employing a recursive, iterative analysis approach, the video excerpts I eventually selected were those that appeared to most comprehensively represent the characteristics unique to each dyad, in line with the research questions regarding values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons. I also examined tacit enculturation processes as they pertained to the research questions.

The excerpts focused substantially on a range of pedagogical strategies and learning and teaching interactions. Some were a common strategy in that dyad while other strategies I observed seemed to be an innovative solution to a vocal technical problem. In each of the dyads I also selected an excerpt of a critical interpersonal interaction event in the lesson series. These interpersonal interactions included mentorship, discussions and conversations about aspects of learning beyond immediate vocal technical skill building.

Each participant in each dyad then viewed selected lesson excerpts in a final video-prompted interview, to interrogate the analysis of the learning and teaching events and provide additional confirmation of the findings. I used the second interview as an opportunity to explore with the teachers and students the tacit learning and interactions taking place, to explain the intent behind some of the pedagogical strategies and to confirm or challenge my own interpretations about the pedagogical and interpersonal interactions.

Several excerpts of the videos shown were then selected for transcription and further analysis (Rowe, 2009). I based these selections on the following rationale: the pedagogical strategies and relational interactions; the outcomes from the second interview data; how the excerpts pertained to the research questions; and in light of discussions with the participants about appropriateness of some excerpts for inclusion in the narrative account.

Video transcriptions

In each case portions of lessons were transcribed through a written description of the visual, audio and dialogic transactions taking place, through which the relational and pedagogic transactions were investigated as they related to the research questions. Due to the difficulty of transcribing gesture, movement and interactions, much time was spent shaping the transcriptions into readable narratives and great care was taken to recognise and manage researcher bias, through a recursive, iterative analysis approach. Some of the transcriptions were peer reviewed by music research colleagues for commentary on the transcription approach.

For Case Study One (*A real voice*), specific pedagogical approaches were viewed at many points in the videos. Given the richness and overwhelming number of potential learning, teaching and interpersonal transactions, I specifically looked for teaching modes, strategies and interpersonal interactions that seemed to be unique to the dyad. Three long video excerpts were transcribed that seemed to incorporated many of the strategies found in the greater video series. One of these was incorporated into the narrative account. Another excerpt showed the teacher in a mentor role, advising the student about future activities. It too was transcribed with parts of it analysed and included in the narrative text.

For Case Study Two (*A way forward*), three minutes from the beginning of several lessons were analysed, specifically looking at warm-up exercises and pedagogical approaches to singing development. Poor student motivation became apparent throughout the course of

this video series and it was clear that the student had failed to learn her songs to any degree of accuracy. The lessons therefore followed a repetitive pathway of teacher-led repertoire learning. The video data was of interest on specific occasions when the student was working on voice technique exercises or discussing goals. One specific lesson event combined three elements: pedagogical strategies for improving singing technique, discussion about shape of the lesson and a conversation about university procedures and exam preparation. It was transcribed and parts of it were included and analysed in the narrative text.

For Case Study Three (*Little courageous decisions*), five events specifically about the learning and teaching of two Mozart songs were transcribed and analysed. These five events took place over several lessons and emerged as a strong focal point for the storying of the narrative account, as they took place over the duration of the semester and seemed to be the main focus of the lessons. Two specific excerpts shown to the participants in the final interview were then included in the narrative text. One excerpt was of the student commencing learning a song, right at the beginning of the lesson series, while the other showed another song in development. In these excerpts I specifically analysed the pedagogical strategies and interpersonal interactions between teacher and student.

Analysis stage two: narrative accounts

Narrative Inquiry Methods

I chose narrative inquiry methods to represent the findings from each of the case studies, because, as Bruner states, "it is through our own narratives that we principally construct a version of ourselves in the world, and it is through its narrative that a culture provides models of identity and agency to its members" (1996 p. xiv). While narrative researchers may use a range of research approaches, what is generally agreed is that "the story is one if not the fundamental unit that accounts for human experience" (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007, p 4). Stories are also viewed as fundamental to the way in which cultural cohesion is perpetuated throughout history, as Bruner claims: "the importance of narrative for the cohesion of a culture is as great, very likely, as it is in structuring an individual life" (1996, p. 40). While narrative methods have been used infrequently in music research, it is now being adopted by music researchers, "consistent with the profession's move towards embracing multiple means and multiple lenses for examining the new and recurring complexities of music in life and learning" (p. 19). According to Barrett and Stauffer "narrative work provides a means to re-conceptualise the ways in which we think about music engagement, music education, and inquiry in music education" (p. 2).

Words as data

Bruner suggests there "appear to be two broad ways in which human beings organise and manage their knowledge of the world… *logical-scientific* thinking and *narrative* thinking (Bruner, 1996, p. 39). He reminds us, however, that despite the importance of logical-scientific thinking "it is only in narrative mode that one can construct an identity and find a place in one's culture" (1996, p. 42). Pinnegar and Daynes report an "increasing desire of researchers to understand better the meaning of human interaction" (2007, p. 14) through words and language rather than solely through numbers and Gergen and Gergen remind us of "the pivotal function of language in creating intelligible worlds" (2008, p. 818). Therefore, it is through this theoretical lens that I composed the narrative accounts.

I employed naturalistic, inductive interpretation to write up the cases with data from the many sources utilised, including the interviews, video-observations, and other artefacts. A visual schema is provided at Figure 16 of how each case study narrative account was shaped and the processes undertaken to ensure confirmation of events and analysis through repeated member checking and external peer reviews. Peer reviewers were selected from a locally–based pool of fellow researchers within the field of music education, who were asked to read a narrative account, interrogate the findings and indicate any discrepancies or errors in the text.
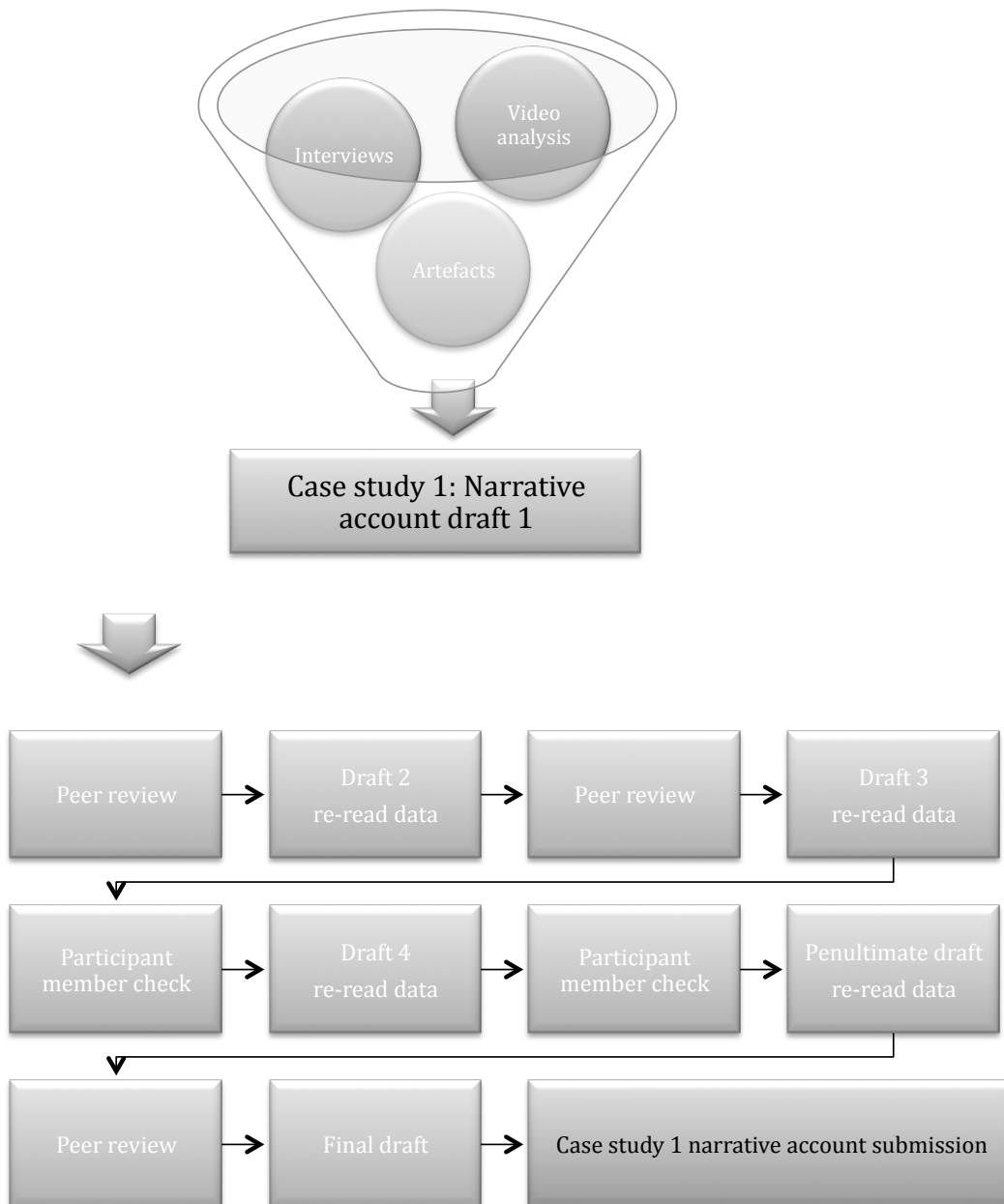
Figure 16: Shaping of the narrative account

Composing Research texts

In composing research texts, Clandinin and Caine (2008) claim researchers must be attentive to both participants and public audiences, but also to the scholarly community, in which questions of relevance and worthiness will be asked of the research text. They note that, ultimately, "research texts develop out of the repeated asking of questions regarding the significance of the research" (2008, p. 543). Narrative analysis is more than mere storying: Hollingsworth and Dybdahl (2008) claim that narrative analysis requires close attention to conversation, structure and dialogic processes within the interview transcripts themselves, through employment of a "bricolage" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, 2005) of critical epistemologies and theories.

Storying the cases

Given the large amount of data provided, including two interviews per participant, up to ten hours of footage of the teaching and learning transactions, and many email conversations and artefacts, plus countless recursive "turns" regarding the material for use, I found it was initially difficult to shape the stories without feeling the voices of each participant were being silenced in some way, or that there was some integral element of their story missing.

Over considerable time, and with continual reference to the research questions and theoretical framework, I refined each narrative account through an iterative, recursive approach that adhered to each participant's perceptions but which focused their stories within the two research questions and the theoretical framework. Negotiation of the narrative text with each case study participant occurred throughout this process, as indicated in Figure 16. As Clandinin and Caine note, "there is continuous interplay among field texts, interim texts and final research texts" (2008, p. 543) due to the recursive nature of narrative analysis and the continual "fluidity and recursiveness as inquirers compose research texts, negotiate them with participants, compose further field texts and recompose research texts. These transitions from field and field texts to authoring research texts are tension-filled" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 48).

Each narrative account was created individually; therefore the research texts were shaped differently each time, yet each has similar identifying features to make the texts navigable to the reader. The shape of the narrative is unique to each dyad, and while the findings are different in each, there are commonalities of experience between the cases that mirror findings in the literature. There is an introduction to the cases and further explanation prior to the Method chapter summary.

The researcher and the researched

While case study approaches recognise the centrality of storytelling in human existence, researchers also acknowledge the "interactive quality of the researcher-researched relationship" (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007, p. 7). Qualitative researchers acknowledge that "the researcher and the researched in a particular study are in a relationship with each other and that both parties will learn and change in the encounter" (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007, p. 9). The ethical underpinning of qualitative research is that attention be paid to these relationships and to how researchers negotiate "entry, exit and representations of experience" (Clandinin and Caine, 2008, p. 543). Therefore attention must be paid not just to the interactions between researcher and researched, but to the research texts and shaping of the data into narrative accounts.

One of the ways in which I paid attention to the ethical dimensions of the research process was to engage my participants in ongoing member checks to ensure they were

represented in ways they deemed accurate. I asked each participant to read through their interview transcripts and recommend alterations where they felt clarity or meaning was lost. No participant returned amended interview transcripts, therefore when they reviewed the narrative accounts there was some minor co-construction of some of the teachers' transcript excerpts. This was to ensure that the teachers' remarks were as representative of their intended meaning as possible. This was particularly so when the teacher was referring to specific vocal techniques and the meaning needed to be clear and accurate. As noted, the video-prompted second interview had given the participants an opportunity to reflect on their interactions and to clarify, confirm or challenge my own interpretations of these events. This enabled their representations of experience to be validated and was an important component of the research process.

Each participant was twice invited to read draft portions of their narrative accounts and to comment on the manner in which they were represented. The students invariably requested only minor changes to the narratives, such as spelling corrections, and reported satisfaction with their narrative accounts.

The teachers wished to ensure that they were represented in accordance with their own self-image, that details of their lives were accurately portrayed, and that any comments about people who could not defend themselves were duly moderated. It may also have been that the teachers' awareness of the key issues within their own values, beliefs and practices were largely tacit, although the lively discussions in the second interviews suggested that teachers were well aware of their own values and beliefs about classical singing pedagogy and were able to articulate these quite clearly.

The potential impact of the teachers' and students' responses to the narratives became a key component in how I drafted the accounts. As with all narrative inquiry methods, building these narratives rested on a sensitive negotiation between how to portray the participants' perceived self-representation and my interpretation of their values and beliefs and pedagogical practices. Each penultimate draft narrative was negotiated with each teacher and student participant prior to final edits, with all satisfied with my interpretation of them, and the teaching and learning approaches. As with any qualitative research approach, consideration must be given to this issue on any reading of this thesis. However, as all participants were involved in the second interview series, many explanations of actual events in the videos were clarified at this point, ensuring participants were empowered to explain their rationale for such actions. These discussions occurred throughout the interview and followed up with further member checking of the narrative accounts.

The many ethical dimensions of the research are explained further in the ethics section.

Analysis stage three: discussion chapter

Case study analysis

For the discussion chapter I employed case study analysis, using direct categorical aggregation to establish and confirm themes and patterns, with direct interpretation and development of naturalistic generalizations. Creswell's table 8.2 of *Data Analysis and Representation by Research Approaches* (2007, pp. 156-157) identifies the approaches of case study in the description, classification, interpretation and representation of the research. An adaptation of the table is provided at Figure 17.

Data Analysis and Representation by Research Approaches (Creswell, 2007)	
Case Study	
Data managing	Create and organize files for data
Reading, memoing	Read through text, make margin notes, form initial codes
Describing	Describe the case and its context
Classifying	**Use categorical aggregation to establish themes or patterns**
Interpreting	**Use direct interpretation and develop naturalistic generalizations**
Representing, visualizing	Present in-depth picture of the case or cases using narrative, tables and figures

Figure 17: Data analysis and representation by research approaches–Case Study (Creswell, 2007)

The discussion chapter findings were drawn from the final draft of each of the narrative accounts, necessitating myriad recursive and inductive reviews of the original data sources to ensure reliability and confirmation of the findings. The discussion analysis occurred quite some time after the narrative accounts had been completed, allowing for a fresh viewing of the data and rumination on the potential findings prior to the write up. Each analysis focused on one of three characteristics particular to that case. I analysed each narrative account by individual participant, using the research questions headers Values and Beliefs, and Practices. Five key themes emerged common to all cases, which were discussed in the individual participant's analysis. A final comment at the end of each case refocused the analysis on the tacit and encultured interpersonal interactions between the dyad.

The themes were developed through categorical aggregation and naturalistic generalizations, as identified by Creswell (2007) in Figure 17, and supported by Reissman, who notes that "theorizing across a number of cases by identifying common thematic elements across research participants, the events they report, and the actions they take is an established tradition with a long history in qualitative inquiry" (2008, p. 74). Using cultural

psychology theories to unpack the findings of the narrative accounts, I analysed the data under the five key themes. These themes were explored in the literature review and used as a conceptual framework within cultural psychology theories to underpin and support the aims of the research questions.

Researcher as participant

Qualitative research requires "an ongoing reflexive and reflective methodology", and researchers "need to inquire continually into their experiences before, during and after each inquiry" (Clandinin and Caine, 2008, p. 542). Autoethnographers "recognize the innumerable ways personal experience influences the research process" (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007, p. 3), but it is also an opportunity to reflect on one's biases as researcher, and to recognize the "relationships between the humans involved" (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007, p. 14) are "not static but dynamic, and growth and learning are part of the research process" (ibid.). In music inquiry, autoethnography allows researchers to sensitively explore the "interconnectedness between their lives and their areas of study, and the relationships they share with those in their fields of inquiry"(Bartleet & Ellis, 2009, p. 7).

In order to explore this interconnectedness I wrote an autoethnography about my own experiences as singing student and teacher (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2010), which I reflexively revised throughout the study. This revealed a commonality of musical experiences between my study participants and me from childhood through to adulthood. This allowed me to explore my own tacit and enculturated concepts about classical singing, and continually review the biases I brought as researcher to the project. I was surprised by how much my experiences mirrored some of the experiences of the teachers in the study and how much my perceptions about classical singing education have changed over the course of five years, particularly in light of my change in focus from classical training to musical theatre training. While this autoethnography allows me to position myself in relation to my study participants, it is not to be considered part of the data set for analysis. It is intended purely to provide the reader insight into how my "personal experience influences the research process" (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007, p. 3), and how I have been informed by the research process both as teacher and educator.

This autoethnography is divided between the beginning and the end of the thesis. My early singing education, my tertiary experiences and how I came to this study sits as a prelude to the introduction chapter, and a reflexive account of how the project has affected and informed my current professional practice forms the postlude after the conclusion chapter.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics approval

This study was cleared by one of the human research ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines [approval number SoM-ETH09-01/001/A-JOB].

Prior to the study commencement all participants gave informed consent regarding their involvement in the study. Written consent was received from each case study participant. Informed consent remained a priority throughout the study and case study participants were regularly contacted throughout the study via telephone call and email to ascertain continued comfort and willingness to engage in the project.

Participants' rights and interests were considered of key importance when choices were made regarding the reporting and dissemination of data.

De-identification

All participants and places were de-identified, although it is acknowledged that in such a small pool of full time singing teachers identification of each is possible. Given their standing in the singing teaching community and the public nature of their teaching approach, each teacher may well be identifiable to that same community. Therefore, there was no reporting of data from the case studies within that community's usual conference pool both nationally and internationally. This was not unduly burdensome as results could be reported at other music conferences where they were unlikely to attend. Anonymity was, however, not guaranteed even then. Nevertheless, by removing and in some cases changing all identifying features of all participants and places, people attending these conference papers who were questioned afterwards felt that they could not know or guess the participant teachers.

All possible efforts were made to ensure anonymity of all participants and their institutions, events and other potentially identifying features. Names of people and places were changed and in some instances even the physical places were altered from their original form. Each participant was asked to nominate a pseudonym, however, only one chose to do so. The remaining participants were informed of the pseudonym chosen for them, with some hilarity and remarking of coincidence of the name selected.

The sex and approximate age of each participant has been maintained, as these elements appeared to be intrinsic to the way participants in each case interact. This study, however, did not investigate gender differences in teaching approaches between male and female teachers. Physical appearance has been altered or not mentioned, except in one participant's case where her physicality became a focal point of the analysis. The participant was satisfied with her portrayal and did not feel it was identifiable.

Member checking

Member checking was incorporated into the study design in several ways. Firstly, transcripts of the first interview were sent to each teacher and student for corroboration and correction.

Second, each participant then viewed selected excerpts of the video observations in the final interview and made comments about the excerpt events. This shared experience allowed the teacher and student to identify the pedagogical approach and make further comments about the learning and teaching processes shown in the video excerpts, and to interrogate my interpretation of the events shown.

Third, a mid-stage draft and subsequent near-final draft of each case study narrative were then sent to the relevant participant for commentary and discussion. Each participant was able to request corrections, alterations and deletions where they felt appropriate, and to comment on the content and shape of the draft.

Finally, emails were exchanged about the narrative chapters and how participants perceived their portrayal.

Trustworthiness

Drawing on the work of Lincoln and Guba (2005), Tracy notes "some of the leading qualitative scholars have opposed the development of permanent unvarying standards for qualitative research, suggesting that universal criteria are problematic, if not fruitless" (2010, p. 838). Nevertheless, she argues, "qualitative researchers will continue to face stakeholder audiences that require rationale for the goodness of our work" (p. 849). In quantitative research, validity and reliability are two standards used to judge or measure whether a study is good or convincing (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012). Qualitative researchers including Lincoln and Guba (1985) have recommended instead the use of terms including "credibility" and "dependability" for evaluating the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012). I have chosen to follow Lincoln and Guba's recommendation. Approaches used in the study to ensure credibility and dependability are explained below.

Credibility and Dependability

In qualitative studies, "credibility is…achieved through practices including thick description, triangulation or crystallization, and multivocality and partiality" (Tracy, 2010, p. 843). In this qualitative study, credibility may be judged through the following. Firstly, I openly acknowledge the bias I bring to the study, through my autoethnographic account and my ongoing self-reflective positioning throughout the research texts. I monitored my reflexivity and bias by keeping a journal and recording field notes as the study progressed. Autoethnography enabled me to "reflect on myself as a learner, critiquing the values and relationship I embody with my students and subject matter" (Bartleet & Ellis, 2009, p. 7).

I engaged in "repeated and substantial involvement in the field" (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012, p. 113), which facilitated an in-depth understanding of the phenomena I was investigating, by spreading the study over the course of several years, and by employing multiple data generation events including participant interviews, extensive video observations, artefact analyses, and ongoing engagement with the teacher and student participants through email correspondence.

Partial triangulation of the data sources was possible through the selection of participants. By including both teachers and students in the data generation, this allowed for comparison of stories and a verification of events in each case. By using multiple data events, I was able to corroborate the evidence via many different means, including comparing the evidence of one type of data set, such as the interviews, with the observational data from the videos. This way I was able to illuminate discrepant findings and negative instances, which afforded the study greater credibility. To ensure further credibility and dependability I set up a number of member checks to review my findings with each participant, including transcripts, video-stimulated recall interviews and interim research texts.

Finally, two peers and colleagues were selected to read through transcriptions and view small portions of the video selected for analysis, to provide an alternate viewpoint of the analysis. These colleagues were also asked to each read through one of the research texts and give critical feedback regarding the connection between the research questions and the findings in each storied account.

Transferability

The study design may be readily transferred to other qualitative studies investigating learning and teaching approaches in one-to-one settings. The study made used of a revised version of Barrett and Gromko (2007) and Barrett's (2006) study on eminent composers, and Rowe's (2009) study investigating gender interactions in one-to-one instrumental music lessons. Clemmons (2007) recommended in her study on rapport in the voice studio that research of this nature and similar design would be a useful addition to the field.

Findings, while not usually generalizable because of the intrinsic nature of each case, allowed for rich descriptions and a holistic and realistic picture of events that occurred in the case settings (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Stake, 1996; Yin, 2004). Research into other learning and teaching contexts that utilise the one-to-one setting may find the discussion arising from the findings useful, however, given the deeply personal and individualistic nature of singing teaching and learning, this is not a fait accompli. However, after presenting findings at a number of conferences, I have been asked to present my research at tertiary music institutions, suggesting the findings are of interest to conservatoires and those managing participants of one-to-one tertiary music lessons.

Limitations of the study

I acknowledge that by creating only three case studies my findings cannot be viewed as necessarily representative of the entire classical singing cohort in Australia. Each case must be viewed for the qualities that make it unique. This is one of the limitations of undertaking case study, which nevertheless has been explained by Flyvbjerg (2006), Stake (1996) and Yin (2004) as providing depth, particularity and context-rich accounts of the case.

Other limitations include the capacity for me as researcher to set the placement of the video cameras, given that I was not going to be there for the lessons, which was explained earlier. Also, as qualitative research methods require attention to the bumps and tensions (Clandinin, Pushor and Orr, 2007) of the lived inquiry space, there are clearly alternate modes of coding, sorting, selecting and interpreting the extensive video data. Nevertheless, rigorous attention to the ethical and personal dimensions of this approach ensures that the findings have been viewed by the participants and discussed with me, to ensure as much dependability as possible in this qualitative study.

Other limiting conditions include: not investigating gender in the context of the one-to-one singing lesson; and not having an equal balance of male and female participants in the study.

Introduction to the narrative accounts

For each case study I created a narrative account. Each account contains a series of vignettes and scenes, the changes from one to the other signified by the symbol *********. The headers are based on actual commentary from the participants and were created as navigation points through the text. Each narrative links the experiences and discussions of the teacher to the experiences and discussions of the student. All names are pseudonyms. Introduction to the case participants and an explanation of the construction of each narrative account are below.

Case Study One: A real voice

Deborah, a singing teacher with more than twenty years experience in teaching and a regularly performing soprano, works full time in a large city conservatoire. She is teacher to second-year student, twenty-five-year old soprano Jennifer.

The shape of the narrative account follows a circular weave of events, beginning with a vignette of Jennifer's final undergraduate performance in an opera staged by the institution. Deborah is then introduced and her life experiences in singing explored. A transcription of a singing lesson follows this, with a commentary that explores the pedagogical approaches revealed in the lesson. Jennifer is then introduced and her experiences in singing and life at the institution are explored. Woven in next is another transcribed lesson vignette that describes a discussion taking place, revealing the chronology of events and movement from instructional style pedagogy to a more discursive, mentor-mentee approach. Again a commentary follows this. Jennifer's journey as a para-professional is then explored and finally there is a discussion with Deborah on how she approached Jennifer's vocal education. A final comment is made about Deborah's student successes, weaving this back to the original vignette.

Case Study Two: A way forward

Mark, a regularly performing baritone in his forties, is a singing teacher at a regional university, whose contract has dropped from full time to casual work, and whose studio numbers have also dropped as a result of changes to the undergraduate classical singing program. He teaches Vanessa, a twenty-year old second-year mezzo-soprano.

This chronological narrative begins with a brief vignette signifying the difficulty of getting in and out of the region, and commences with Vanessa's story. Mark's story about his life and singing experiences is then explored. A lesson excerpt is then shown, followed by a commentary about the activities, conversation and pedagogical approach seen in this and other lessons. Vanessa's experiences in the intervening months and discussion about some of the pedagogical approaches in the lesson video excerpts are then explored. This is followed

by a discussion of Mark's experiences both in and out of the singing lessons. A final commentary about Mark's journey out of the region concludes the account.

Case Study Three: Little courageous decisions

Clarice, a soprano in her fifties, works full time as a singing teacher and researcher at a large city conservatoire. She performs in connection with practice-based research and is in constant demand as a clinician. She is considered an expert in singing pedagogy. Her student Phoebe is an eighteen-year-old mezzo-soprano in her second year at the conservatoire.

This narrative takes the symmetrical form of a musical arch or palindrome: ABCDCBA form. It begins with Clarice's account of her life-long singing experiences and how she perceives her role as a singing teacher. Phoebe, her student is then introduced and her experiences explored. A lesson excerpt of Phoebe commencing learning a Mozart aria is transcribed and a commentary follows this. Clarice's email comments about Phoebe's approaches to learning singing follow. Another lesson excerpt of Phoebe singing a different Mozart song is then transcribed and analysed. Phoebe's current experiences and perceptions about the video excerpts are discussed, and the narrative account concludes with Clarice's final interview and a brief commentary regarding their current activities.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed description of the study's research methodology. Collective case study was utilised to illustrate the pedagogical, relational and culturally shaped strategies used in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons between three eminent teachers and their students. The six case study participants were purposefully selected and several data generation tools were employed, including individual interviews, videoed singing lessons, artefacts, and emails. The data were reviewed against the literature as well as emergent themes and an inductive, iterative and recursive analysis approach was employed, using two methods–narrative inquiry methods and case study analysis. Credibility and dependability were accounted for through various strategies including the methodological approach, participant selection, multiple data generation events, member checks and peer triangulation of the findings.

A literature review was conducted to devise a conceptual framework for the design and analysis of the study. Key findings from the study were identified through a reiterative, recursive, inductive process, which compared the literature to enable interpretations and conclusions to be drawn. The intent was that this study would illuminate the "hidden" processes taking place in the one-to-one lesson and that findings would contribute to discussion around the validity and construction of one-to-one music lessons, to enable greater transparency of this learning and teaching approach within the wider music education community.

Chapters Four, Five and Six are narrative accounts and are not prefaced by an explanatory text. They are best read in their entirety. Chapter Seven then individually analyses each account through individual participant values, beliefs and practices.

Chapter Four. A real voice

On the stage

It is dark in the auditorium. A single spotlight illuminates the stage. In its glow a young woman dressed in white kneels before a religious statue. As the music moves to its climax, she looks up at the statue and sings. Her strong, steely voice spins up and over the orchestra, arresting, thrilling. It fills the hall and wraps me in its aural web. "Quando potrò morire? Parlarmi, amore!" she cries.

I am watching the annual student opera production at an Australian conservatorium, deeply moved by the elegant set, simple costumes and atmospheric staging of this one-act opera, which is ideal for student performers. I have come to watch a student, Jennifer, perform in the major role. I realise I am holding my breath in nervous anticipation of her debut–the opera may be short but it has a difficult, well-known and loved aria, and I worry that she will falter in her performance. She is not my student, but I am invested in her story and in her success: I want her to do well.

She doesn't disappoint. Her full-lyric soprano carries effortlessly over the unwieldy sounds of the student orchestra, and she sings and acts with grace, musicality and passion. While she reveals some minor flaws in her singing, they will be easily remedied with a little more performance experience. I am thrilled for her and proud of her achievement.

After the performance we see each other in the foyer at interval and hug warmly. I congratulate her. She is gracious and humble in her response. She asks if there were any problems with her performance that I could see, but I assure her there was nothing I noticed– it is important to me that my comments are positive, and that a critique be provided by her teachers and not by me, a near stranger. She tells me she will be a Young Artist with the local opera company next year, and I am thrilled for her. Jennifer has come a long way since I first spoke with her in early 2010: she seems to be on target for a career in opera.

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Deborah: the builder

I wanted to be a psychiatrist

When I was growing up I wanted to be a psychiatrist more than anything! Deborah and I laugh together. We are sitting in Deborah's teaching room, a large room with papers and books and teaching paraphernalia strewn about the place. One corner holds a grand piano, and in the opposite a haphazardly stacked bookcase. In another corner is a cheval mirror and camera tripod, and her desk is against the window, piled high with paperwork. It's a friendly, busy workspace with posters on the walls and a shawl covering the piano lid.

Deborah has been teaching classical voice for nearly twenty years and is now in a position of responsibility at her institution. She talks about her childhood, her music teacher mother and very musical family only briefly. She had little sense of herself as a career singer until the age of sixteen: I really didn't have any instruction or concept of myself as a solo singer much, through my teenage years, and really stumbled into singing very late… it was like my voice kind of popped out. She was encouraged to take up singing lessons by her music teacher. Deborah had some lessons at a friend's house, at which point she was encouraged to audition for the Con. She laughs: I showed up in my sports uniform–I'll always remember it! Offered a small scholarship, this set her on the path to pursuing singing as a career, leaving behind her somewhat wistful dream of entering the medical profession.

The architecture of the music

As she describes her student experiences, Deborah's tone is warm as she reminisces about the full, work-intensive timetable spanning forty contact hours per week, and wealth of famous visiting artists to the institution. She relates a tale about a tenor employed by the Conservatorium at that time:

> He was wonderful, and just really very warm and generous and encouraging. Gave us all totally inappropriate repertoire, had us all singing enormous things in Verdi and Puccini and "c'mon now lovey, you know!" [she mimics a broad Australian accent], you know, he was extraordinary! He would sing to us, you know, sing whole phrases of something, or half an aria or something and it was so inspirational, and also was a fantastic example of aural modelling because even though he wasn't himself a coach of any sort, he could shape a Puccini contour so perfectly that you immediately understood what the architecture of the music was, and that is something that really gifted and talented singers can convey, even if they can't articulate it. It's there in the way they model these things, so they were wonderful, wonderful classes.

Despite the tenor's idiosyncratic approach and use of inappropriate repertoire, Deborah enjoyed learning from this singer, with his innate musical understanding and use of aural modelling, a pedagogical technique common to many Australian singing teachers, who still appear to employ aural modelling as a way of imparting musical ideas (Callaghan, 2000; Mitchell, 2014).

I knew how to behave professionally

Deborah feels her institution prepared her quite well for professional life. Amongst her theoretical subject she also had that strong sense of community that goes with being a musician; I understood how to be part of a team. I had a fairly strong drilling in performance etiquette and professional conduct, so I knew how to behave professionally. Her university education had prepared her well for the rigors of the profession and she was being inculcated into a way of behaving and acting that mirrored the operatic profession (Oakland, 2012, 2014, Schindler, 2010). However, other aspects of her training had a negative effect on her career.

Singing on my capital

The deficits included inadequate singing training. Deborah claims she didn't have a vocal technique. She doesn't blame her teacher, she says, who she explains referred to Vennard and other voice scientists, and who understood the fundamentals of vocal technique: I think she was really quite progressive and forward thinking. It just didn't really translate into her particular approach.

Deborah was taught singing through imitation and mental imagery, which she believes has its limits. She feels that if you are away from the aural model without a solid understanding of how the instrument works, there is nothing to hold on to. The imitative and image based pedagogy common in singing teaching (Callaghan, 1998, 2000, Mitchell and Kenny, 2005; Welch et al, 2005) was not enough to sustain Deborah's voice in light of a demanding career. Deborah elaborates.

> I was a musically intelligent singer, I could sing a range of repertoire and I had this good ear, but I really was singing on my capital instead of my interest. And you can do that for a little while, and I did that for the best part of nearly ten years, but… as you need to be able to meet more demands and do more soloistic work, then your deficits become more and more apparent.

Deborah observes that her lessons from another teacher and professional years in the national opera company prior to overseas travel probably exacerbated her poor vocal health, then, during her time in a frantically busy European opera house working alongside well-

trained American singers, she discovered her inadequate technique didn't hold up when compared to her colleagues. While she acknowledges the work environment was a lovely one and her colleagues were friendly, it was plainly apparent to me they could sing and I couldn't. She was isolated and in panic, struggling to disguise from everyone that she was in difficulty, feeling it was not appropriate for her to stop singing at age thirty to relearn the fundamentals of vocal technique. Several distinguished female opera singers (Hammond, 1971; Bronhill, 1987) write of the same misery upon learning their poor technique will not suffice in the professional operatic sphere. In significant distress, Deborah returned to Australia, broke and uncertain about her future.

A wounded singer

Deborah was injured during her overseas sojourn partly through singing repertoire unsuitable for her Fach, but also because she had not built essential vocal stamina. After a frustrating period asking a number of teachers to teach her the fundamentals of breath management and support, she was finally rescued by a teacher–Kathryn–who herself had had faulty vocal technique in need of repair. Deborah believes that Kathryn was instrumental in repairing her.

> She's very intuitive and can sort of sense what a wounded singer's psyche is like as well, so she was really very beneficial to me. But to her credit she did sort of take on the whole job of rehabilitating me, as it were… I spent three months learning how to breathe, which I should really have been taught, so many years earlier.

Kathryn took a motor-learning approach with Deborah, which subsequently helped Deborah to understand the physiology and function of the vocal mechanism and subsequently apply this technique to her students. Deborah had previously had difficulty in conceptualising embodied vocal technique and feels she had not been given the pedagogical tools to unpack this element of her training.

It wasn't explained or shown to me

Proprioception and kinaesthetic awareness for developing singers is fundamental to developing secure vocal technique, but Deborah relates it then to the pedagogical strategies employed to make it an embodied process.

> To TEACH that aspect of the craft, needs to be understood and be able to be unpacked, because you can say to someone "there will be a big physical awareness you need to feel that" but if they don't know how to get to that stage of what that feels like then it's enormously frustrating… It wasn't explained to me or shown to me how I

could acquire that in a motor-learned sense, and that was for me the component that was missing.

The inability to perceive technical ideas was frustrating, but Deborah eventually learned how to feel body support, which she suspects that she may not have been able to access anyway, had she been younger.

Even if that had been offered to me as a younger student perhaps I wasn't at a stage within myself where I would have been comfortable taking that on, or someone drawing attention to my need to be physically aware or present in my body, because that can be quite confronting and you have to be comfortable within yourself.

A vocal crisis is more than just voice

Deborah sees her vocal crisis as a positive incident, giving her valuable skills that she subsequently applied to her teaching career.

Possibly it's that old saying; the worst thing that can happen to you is the best thing that can happen to you…I think possibly what is a vocal crisis is really much more than just voice, you know, it's a crisis on a number of levels.

Deborah's crisis came at a time when her professional identity and sense of singer self were unravelling. Her voice, a unique part of her self-identity, was damaged, causing a crisis in Deborah's sense of self-worth. Luckily, her vocal rehabilitation allowed healing of both body and mind to take place. Deborah managed to sustain a performing career while rebuilding her technique, singing with an acclaimed chamber ensemble and travelling throughout the world as a performer.

Trying to develop a craft

Deborah had access to physiology training *prior* to commencing her teaching career, an unusual opportunity, as many singers learn to teach ad hoc (Callaghan, 2000; Davidson and Jordan, 2007; Gaunt, 2008; Welch et al, 2005). Remedial work on her voice also provided important pedagogical knowledge. However, it took her a while to get the basics right, including time management and pedagogical development. I used to run an hour, an hour and a half late because I just didn't know what I was doing! In this time Deborah continued her learning.

I had quite a bit of opportunity to watch my other colleagues, or learn from them a little bit, at least I tried to. But you just develop it yourself, don't you? I just put things together and I was doing a lot of my own singing and popping back and forth to Kathryn

and going to conferences and trying to develop a craft, and getting quite excited about it, you know. Things were starting to happen for my students that I felt quite encouraged by.

I teach in a reaction to the way I was taught

Deborah values efficient teaching in part because she was trained that way by another of her teachers, who would barely greet her students before going straight to the piano to work. She is distressed by some of her students who perceive the long development period prior to a career in opera as a chance to be idle, whereas she feels singing lessons are a place for hard work. She says,

> There's often a concept in singing that you're young, that you have time… I think and I know that I teach in a reaction to the way I was taught, in a bid to give students those elements that were not offered to me, so I feel like "well, let's get on with it".

Deborah is concerned that the duration of an undergraduate degree is not nearly long enough for most singers to develop a craft and that poor vocal techniques contribute to poor career prospects. She feels one-to-one lessons with students is an efficient way to achieve this and notes that four years is only half of the time needed by students to develop their vocal technique.

> If you use a one-to-one lesson the way it's meant to be used, you can bring about swift changes and permanent, and have a really big impact. It's also those other things that are unspoken that we pick up as students when we're spending that time with our teacher.

Good teaching throughout the degree, she feels, is vital for efficient management of a singer's future career, instead of going out into the world with a half-baked technique or none at all and having to learn how to sing, and stop–or put the brakes on your career part way through and readjust that–that's just not efficient.

A singing lesson is about working

Deborah feels that maintaining a personal distance allows more efficient time use in the lessons and prepares students for a professional life, although she acknowledges personal issues can take an emotional toll on the act of singing and that she often has long conversations with her students in their lessons about various personal issues. Nevertheless, she says,

I resent that taking up their lesson time. I think it's important that students learn to shelve some of that stuff and they have to learn to compartmentalise because that's very important. And it's a very important skill, because you can't work professionally if it's all geared to your emotional state.

Deborah's comment moves from what I perceive to be "time" efficient teaching to what I sense is an "emotional" efficiency too. She intuitively models a preferred approach to the lesson to her students. She believes

a singing lesson is about working, and it's about an exchange, and yes it's personal, but I see it as something which you can also approach in a variety of ways. I try to indicate just through my conduct that "okay, this is our work time", and most of them want that. Because they only get one lesson a week, they understand that they need to prepare and to come in with a sense of working that way.

Deborah develops an implicit contract of agreed behaviours between teacher and student. One such behaviour includes the student's responsibility to learn their notes and practise, and to respect the teaching and learning space.

If you send them away because they don't know their work they'll never do it again. I think you have to teach them how to treat you. I mean, how to behave… But it's partly because that's how I like to work, so I assume that's how they like to work.

Each student is different

Deborah outlines her approach for a new student by diagnosing at the beginning of the year then planning the semester's work accordingly. She makes case notes and keeps a file on each student that she refers to throughout the year. As the year progresses, she and the student discuss any performance exam results and Deborah then uses these discussions to plan the next phase. We talk about some of her teaching strategies and Deborah admits there are students with whom she resorts to imitation, even though she dislikes it.

I try very hard not to sing in my student's lessons. I regard imitation as so limited, because that's my experience of it, but there are many students where I've resorted to it, shall we say, because they just don't get what I'm after. And particularly if it's an aesthetic, they're not going to be able to have heard it and they can't respond to it.

Deborah believes each student is different, each student, each one's different. I mean the basics are there but you've got to be aware of how they learn, and what they can cope

with. She believes she shapes her teaching approach according to how they best learn, and that this difference makes each dyad unique.

We're working in a highly interpersonal way

I ask Deborah if her inability to assist particular students causes her to pass the student to another teacher and she agrees that there are some for whom she feels she is just not the right match, but that she works on her limitations as a singer and teacher. Nevertheless, she admits that there are a number of ways in which the pedagogical relationship may not work. Serra (2011, 2014) and Clemmons (2007) explored personality and adult attachment theories in one-to-one singing lessons to find that personal and psychological characterisations of teacher and students also determined success of the pedagogical relationship over and above the usual teaching approaches. I ask Deborah what she thinks of this relational necessity. Deborah laughs merrily, well, it's not lost on me my love for psychiatry! However, she believes that teachers should not take the place of psychologists. Yes, we're working in a highly interpersonal way, and we're dealing with things that are directly linked to our emotions and our thought processes, and are very personal and private aspects of self. Deborah warns, however,

> I think it's really important to recognise your own professional scope, and that if there's something more required, that then you are smart enough to refer on and that you have the sort of network that you can refer to appropriately so that your work is complemented by someone else's expertise.

Deborah feels developing networks for her students is vital for their professional preparedness, but that it also dilutes what could potentially be an unhealthy reliance on the teacher by the student. It allows the student to become comfortable working with a range of instructors and different developmental concepts. She comments,

> A professional singer needs to take instruction and a variety of ideas from a variety of people, like their coach and their language tutor, and the prompt in the box and the conductor, and the director. They need to be able to take that instruction, to assimilate it and to work in that way.

No, I'm not your friend

Deborah affirms that the one-to-one relationship can become a little intense at times and that it is the duty of the teacher to ensure students do not become inappropriately attached or dependent. She believes the network of professionals she develops for her students allows her to maintain an emotional distance.

It's your duty to help them actually see that and remind them and say "no, I'm not your friend", you know… I feel that if you do have a network of people that you utilise or that they're exposed to, that that's less likely to become such an issue. I think I've rarely had a student where there were real problems in that way. Maybe it's something about me!

Tethered to your student

Deborah picks much of the repertoire for her students but she also relies on a coach for advice, and she has created a network of professionals with whom she works.

Sometimes it takes a while to establish that team or it might be something quite loose, but I personally think that's essential, at least that's something I utilise in my own work.

While Deborah relies on her network within the school to assist her in teaching her students she does not always feel free to work in this way. She talks longingly for a more transparent approach to learning singing at her institution.

Ideally I'd love to be in an environment that was really a shared type arrangement. I actually really quite like working in a formative way. I don't mind working at the coalface, I like teaching technical basics, because I feel like I understand that and it's something that I feel I'm quite good at teaching. I would be happy to then, have them move onto a different layer after that where they might do aspects of style, or recitative or something… I get the feeling that it's not possible – mainly because its never been done that way, I suppose, and maybe because it wouldn't work for everyone. So unfortunately it's not like that. What happens is that you are tethered to your student! And it's terribly insular…

I sense Deborah's frustration about not having access to the expertise of her teaching cohort, and she talks of occasionally allowing her students to work with another teacher, fixing up stylistic pointers. Deborah confesses she only gives them a sprinkling, because they have to be at a stage where they won't abandon their other stuff and go. Even as she desires a more collaborative approach, she reveals her wariness of allowing young singers to accept what she feels might be contradictory technical advice.

We're not like plants that you water

Deborah points out that learning, particularly the motor-learned skills development of classical singing, is not evenly paced over three years. It is incremental and motor learned and continued, regulated development she believes is just not realistic for most students. She

is worried that the prescriptive requirements of her institution don't allow for individual development.

> There's a lot of repetition and there's that slow layering, but people don't improve at regular intervals. It would be great if they did, but they just don't! So sometimes they'll make a horrible noise for two years and all of a sudden it just comes into place… We're not like plants that you water and they just continue to grow evenly, we just go shooting in all different directions, or maybe stunted and nothing for five years! It's very hard…

Deborah feels the reflectiveness required of her craft in performance is beneficial to her as a teacher. She believes that performing and teaching are complementary. I think if you're a performer that knows how to reflect on your craft and is interested in the building blocks, then you'll be interested in the building blocks for your teaching, because you understand the importance of them. Deborah comments on the holistic, personal nature of singing teaching, which she believes is intrinsically aligned with her self-identity as a singer.

> I think you should be working on yourself as a singer. That will make you a good teacher. Hopefully. I mean it's the combination of things, really. But you've got to be living it, you've got to be experiencing it from the inside out, to bring about that dynamic which is a singer's dynamic, and to know how to draw that from a student because you know what it feels like on the inside.

For Deborah, her own singing forms part of a continuum of learning, and is at the heart of all her transactions with her students. She feels she understands the developmental needs of her students because she had experienced difficulties herself, and because she continues to work on her own craft.

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Lesson excerpt: motor-learned singing pedagogy

Deborah cries, "Ok! I think we're rolling. So, have you warmed?" She sits at the grand piano, pushing her salon-styled hair back from her face and looks at her student Jennifer. Jennifer is standing in the curve of the piano, drinking water from a plastic bottle. She is neatly, almost formally dressed, long hair tied in a loose bun. She shakes her head and replies softly, "No, I've just come straight from French".

"Ok, so, let's lean over the piano, just to warm. That's good." Deborah adjusts the camera and then chuckles merrily. Jennifer's back faces the camera as she leans on the piano.

"Here's Jennifer's backside!" Jennifer laughs too, and doesn't seem overly perturbed as they begin the breathing exercise.

"Are you comfy there? Shoulders and then just go Sshhh!"

"Shh, sss, fff, vvv, zzz, shhh, vvv".

"That's nice." Deborah plays a descending five-note scale. Jennifer sings a series of raspberry scales but tilts her head ever so slightly as she sings. Her voice is very large, robust and with a steely quality that suggests a future dramatic or spinto soprano. Her physical frame is likewise robust and a little heavy for her height, and she looks older than her twenty-five years.

Deborah looks closely at Jennifer over the top of the piano but can't see her lower half. "I can't see your legs so I'm just going to check your alignment." She walks round the piano and places her hand gently on the small of Jennifer's back, saying "that's good, that's getting long, that's lengthening. Yep" then does the same on her neck, and the top of her head. Jennifer visibly lengthens her spine in response, altering her alignment with the physical cues.

They continue the exercise. Deborah plays piano and watches Jennifer closely and calls out directive cues while Jennifer sings. "Release. Change, noisy V. Energy in the breath. Splat."

The exercise continues for five minutes through a range of voiced fricatives and vowels, up and down the scale, within the treble stave. Deborah asks Jennifer to step away from the piano and try the same exercise, this time rolling up from a bent over position into a standing one. She rolls her shoulders back and her alignment is tall and straight.

They continue the five-note descending scale exercise in an ascending pattern, using a soft 'thee' word. They then descend again on a 'thar' word. Breath and an open throat are attended to in this exercise. Deborah calls out single word instructions through the many repetitions of the exercise. Every scale has another, similar instruction: "release and send". There is little chat.

"Good!" Deborah praises Jennifer then reminds Jennifer of the next exercise by singing a series of vowels on a descending and rising 5-note scale pattern preceded by a soft th: thee theh thah thoh thoo thoh thah theh thee. Jennifer sings.

Deborah stops playing and says, "yeah, ok, so we're really just trying to keep the tongue high – as close as you can to the ee". She gestures with her hand near her head in a beak shape. She sings three notes and says, "feeling like those sides are heading for those upper molars." Jennifer begins the exercise again but the sound is a bit woolly and pressed. Deborah stops immediately after the first repetition and says, "we drop off a bit there, yeah? Again."

Jennifer nods and repeats the scale. Deborah says, "we have to think about slightly more honest vowels". When Jennifer sings again the tone is appreciably brighter. "Much better!"

They continue warm up exercises designed to move the larynx, speedy scales and arpeggios. Deborah speaks in a type of code–quick directives with little chat, and quick words of praise for the correct approach.

The warm up continues. Jennifer's large voice is a bit unwieldy but her responses are quick and the resultant change in tone is immediate. Many times Deborah shares her diagnosis of a vowel tone and together they agree on a solution.

After about 24 minutes, Jennifer tells Deborah of the difficulty she has in maintaining low breath support. She has the sensation of cracking if she is not supporting low notes but doesn't know how to maintain the support. Deborah doesn't know either, and asks Jennifer to further articulate her problem. They then discuss the merits of low breath support and over-supporting. Deborah suggests the problem might be an imbalance of breath and muscle, and suggests two remedies: going back to noisy W, or checking to see if the tongue is doing "funny things with the vowels".

They continue a while longer with the warm up, going through a series of "slimming" vowels for the voice. Deborah explains her rationale for specific vowels, and I wonder whether she is unpacking the exercise partially for the benefit of the camera, as she explains everything in some detail for Jennifer, whom I assume already knows most of the exercises. Still, it's a good way for Jennifer to revisit the basics of her vocal technique.

Thirty minutes into the forty-five-minute recording, Deborah suggests they work through a song. There is initial discussion regarding four competition arias Jennifer has prepared. This five-minute discussion is integral to the work Jennifer will do throughout the semester, as the aria selection will prove important both for the competitions she has entered and her mid-year result. It is vital that the arie chosen reflect Jennifer's developing skill and are the best vehicles for her voice. Deborah rejects some songs that have a "mezzo-soprano tessitura", suggesting instead that some Strauss and large Spanish songs will be best for Jennifer.

Deborah looks at her watch and suggests they look at an aria, and they spend the last thirteen minutes of the lesson working on Signore ascolta, Liu's aria from Act One of Turandot, by Puccini. Deborah accompanies Jennifer on the piano with reasonable skill. Jennifer knows the aria already, having learnt it a few days prior and has little trouble with the Italian, although some of her vowels need modifying due to the shape of the vocal tract.

Issues concerning portamento are raised in the first phrase and musical expression seems allied to the physical, motor-learned approach Jennifer must take in each phrase. Jennifer has a habit of tilting her head slightly on each breath intake, which goes unnoticed by

Deborah. The camera shows the side on view of Jennifer when she sings, so I can see this small habitual problem, and I wonder if Deborah will notice it in future lessons.

Progress is slow, methodical and intensive, with each phrase attended to in some detail. Jennifer has trouble with a squeaky voice in the final phrase, which has a last, sustained high note, and time is spent working through this phrase. Deborah remarks that Jennifer's voice might be too heavy for this role–she comments that Jennifer's full-lyric soprano is a European weight, saying that her voice would be perfect for the character Liu in the European houses. She offers a number of remedies and between them they find a temporary solution for the squeaky top, utilising exercises from the first part of the lesson.

To conclude the lesson Deborah begins to discuss what will happen on Thursday with the accompanist, and within thirty seconds shuts off the video camera.

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Commentary: back to basics

This lesson, being the first in the series but not the first lesson for the year, shows Jennifer's developing skill and the difficulty she has in supporting her at times unwieldy voice. Deborah's approach and vocal technique is specific to Jennifer's large voice. There is little talk, particularly in the first section. The filmed portion of the lesson is divided into three sections: exercises, discussion about arias, and repertoire work. Each of these sections shows intense, directed energy and a business-like, efficient approach from both student and teacher. A full thirty minutes of the lesson is devoted to an intense and thorough vocal diagnostic warm-up, which, according to both Jennifer and Deborah, is quite unusual. Deborah's voice is low–almost hypnotic, and very calm as she repeats her directions for subsequent exercises. Deborah's approach here is transmissive, but without the type of feedback that would suggest new concepts are being taught, rather the series of exercises frequently used in a consistent combination allow for deep concentration to occur. Jennifer spends most of the lesson excerpt singing.

Deborah selects five exercises, building concept upon concept, allowing for an orderly integration of each. Deborah and Jennifer seem to have developed a code for some of the concepts and the lesson pacing is fluid, steady moving and efficient in the amount of work that is being achieved. Deborah asks Jennifer about various aspects of her technique, requiring Jennifer to make diagnoses about her own vocal process. This type of lesson is characteristic, perhaps, of many singing lessons, where the process of building the voice is done at the beginning of the lesson, and the concepts taught in that first half are then applied to the artistic second half.

Jennifer: shaping the singer self

We are sitting in a small practice room in the Conservatorium. It is a bland, cold-lit space, empty save for an upright piano, a small desk and two chairs. There are no pictures on the wall and the room is depressingly beige. At twenty-five, Jennifer is older than most of the undergraduate students at the Con. I have asked Jennifer about her early experiences in music and it appears Jennifer has had a very musical upbringing, despite, as she claims much later on, her parents not being at all musical. I ask Jennifer to tell me how she got into singing.

Something, something HIT

I'd always sung in choirs, we did a concert with Sumi Jo, and she was just… I'd never heard anyone live like that and I just thought, "that's the most sublime thing to be able to do", and that was the moment that I thought, "what an amazing thing to be able to do"… There's just *something*, something *hit*, I'd heard opera singers on recordings but I'd never heard one in the flesh, live, like that, and the power! And I think people realise how majestic it is – and it was – and it really touched me, in a really deep way, and I think that was the point where I really wanted to focus on singing. I didn't think that I had the talent necessarily to, to do it, but I just thought, you know, "may as well, makes me happy", and "go for it".

Jennifer's experience shows how she was influenced by the emotional, personal quality of live singing by an opera professional, which triggered in her an intrinsic motivation to learn singing and *become* a singer.

I was better than what they'd given me credit for

After some poor quality singing lessons while at her regional secondary school, Jennifer auditioned for entry into a university music course, explaining that she did not audition for the Conservatorium because she didn't think she was good enough at that stage. While she gained entry into a music-teaching course, she was told bluntly that she was not going to be a singer. She sounds incredulous as she tells the tale. They said "well that's just not going to happen". They just told me straight out. And they said, "we think you'd make an excellent music teacher, but we just don't think that you'd have the strength to do a BMus in voice" and that was pretty devastating.

Jennifer began but did not continue her music education studies, and in disappointment went back home to her regional town, opened a music teaching business, and built a teaching career. Using her earnings from her business, she would

go round to Masterclasses or, you know, if anyone came into town I'd hound them and sing for them and just try and really be self-sufficient. I'd look up articles or videos or tapes or anything. I'd fly down to see [my teacher] once a month, you know. Basically any money I earned went back into trying to discover why I wasn't good or how I could get better, because it was still a passion and even though I had pretty much the biggest rejection you could have, you know, I just really felt that I was better than what they'd given me credit for.

With support from her singing teacher she started attending singing competitions and began winning them. At one such competition she was advised by the adjudicator to audition for the Conservatorium, which she subsequently did, gaining entry and a living allowance scholarship to help support her tertiary studies.

Jennifer possesses tenacity in her quest to develop her voice. Her continued effort throughout this early period suggests that Jennifer has a strong underlying sense of self-belief in her voice despite being told otherwise, and a deep passion for singing. Jennifer seems, even in the face of adversity, driven and committed to her development in singing, and to the development of a career in opera. Of her acceptance into the Conservatorium, she feels it affirmed her belief in her voice. It was definitely a life-changing sort of thing, but I've never regretted it. There's been times where it's been really tough, but, I think, that the affirmation that I've got since I've gotten here with my voice has been just so…overwhelming, really.

Playing an opera singer

For Jennifer, a self-supporting student in a big city away from her country-based family has caused substantial financial difficulties, despite her scholarship. She works part-time, but still practises a minimum of two hours a day and takes part in a range of singing-related classes that provide opportunities to work with other music professionals. Jennifer tells a story about how she learned to sing.

Your voice is you, it's unique to you, it's your own fingerprint in a way. What I found the most difficult is because I had a good ear, I just mimicked. I mimicked my teacher, I mimicked my choir conductor, I mimicked people I heard on the radio, I mimicked TV, I was basically playing an opera singer or playing a classical singer for years, until I came here and Deborah said "oh, it's a nice sound, but it's not actually your voice", which was, you know, pretty devastating, in a way, because you just think it's fake, it's

not real, it's not supported, it's not connected, it's not real, you're just making a sound of it, someone else is making and you're just copying.

Although Jennifer identified as a singer, she was being asked to change the intrinsic sound quality of her voice. Jennifer's own perception of her voice had therefore to change, and with it, her perception about her place in the future operatic culture she wished to join. She admits that she didn't like the process at first, being intimidated by having to strip her voice back.

This was a sound that won competitions; it was a pleasing voice that people said "that's a great sound", so it was a capable sound, but it wasn't open, it wasn't free, it wasn't correct. And it wasn't me! So why would you just settle for that? But, my first year here was just stripping everything back, and getting rid of all the tension and all the bad habits, and at first I didn't like what I heard.

I ask Jennifer to clarify her sensation about her voice. She says animatedly that her voice wasn't pretty any more. She felt she sounded ugly.

I used to say to Deborah, "I sound like a man" or "I have a big wobble" or "I sound eighty", 'cause my voice was not used to being free, so there was a big wobble, and it was flat all the time… I didn't sound pretty anymore, and that sort of thing. For me, I wasn't making a beautiful sound, but I've had to learn to love that sound, and to find the beauty in it, of *myself*, and say, "well it may not be a pretty, light sound, but it's my sound, and it's beautiful in its own way, much the same as saying " well I'll never look like Elle McPherson but I'm beautiful in my own way".

Jennifer values lyric voices over and above dramatic voices. I speculate if this is in reaction to having to change her voice from a fake sound to a "real" one, and change what she believes represents vocal beauty. It may also require a rethink of her place and vocal fach within the opera profession. I am also interested in her admission that she has had to learn to love herself, her image, and her identity, which seems a vulnerable position to be in as a developing singer. Nevertheless, Jennifer trusts the judgement of her singing teacher.

She's in my corner one hundred percent

Jennifer is complimentary of and enthusiastic about her singing lessons with Deborah.

She has actually, she's been the number one person in terms of turning my thinking around in that regard, because she's had to be there from day one, and she has just

been so affirming that she truly believes that I have a real voice and a quality of voice, and that it's something that she really believes is something good.

Both Deborah and Jennifer talk of the concept of "real voice", an amorphous statement about vocal quality and worth. Jennifer believes that it's the role of the teacher to enable confidence in the student, which she feels Deborah provides.

I think it's her job as a teacher to build us all up, and I think confidence is so crucial to singing. If you don't feel confident, then you'll never sing as well as you possibly could if that makes sense. I've had confidence slumps and she's had to literally, like pull me out of them with her own two bare hands.

Jennifer feels that while all teachers should be caring and supportive, Deborah's relationship with her students is more personal.

This is her life, we are her life

Jennifer laughs as she recounts a moment when Deborah texted Jennifer in the middle of the night with a request to learn a particular aria, commenting

She is so committed! I really admire her because she's got her performance stuff, she tours, and she gives her students this personal attention… This is her life, we are her life, and we appreciate her more than anything. There are probably a core group of us who are always like "do you need a coffee", or "do you want us to go get a sandwich" or something, to make her, sure she's not falling off the piano stool, you know, we really do try and look after her so as she does with us.

Jennifer is at pains to point out that Deborah is not trying to be overly personal:

I don't think she's trying to be anyone's counsellor or mother or anything like that, I think it's just her values as a teacher and her core beliefs. It's just: she's available, that's the biggest thing. There's no boundary really there – we all respect her and we would never push the line but I just think she's so personal. It's great.

Jennifer's frank account of her loyalty to her teacher indicates a reciprocal and at times nearly co-dependent relationship between Deborah and her students, somewhat at odds with Deborah's own self-appraisal.

She just works for me

Jennifer talks about the "fit" of teacher to student and believes it's important in the learning and teaching relationship.

> I do believe that once you find that one that works... you hear singers all the time "oh he just works for me" or "she just works for me" or "have you worked with someone, she really worked for me". That's like the key phrase, they either work or they don't.

She talks about how important communication between teacher and student is, and how understanding the "dialogue" or pedagogical approach of a particular teacher is crucial to success in learning. Jennifer feels that Deborah's approach is one she understands well, even while many visiting artists to the institution say essentially the same thing.

> We all know what these guest artists, amazing guru people are going to say; we all have the same issues, no matter what language you're talking. They're going to point out the same things, because there are universal truths about singing, but everyone has their *own dialogue* with it, and it's whoever's dialogue speaks clearest to you, and I just understand it.

Continuing her learning

As Jennifer possesses tenacity and thirst for learning, so too, she perceives Deborah is equally enthusiastic. She feels this commitment to ongoing learning gives Deborah's students an edge.

> She's so enthusiastic about continuing her learning… She's completely open to new suggestions, ideas about technique. And that's what I really appreciate. But at the same time, as long as it's an open, free sound, she's not too fussed how you get there. She does have very specific tools, but as long as at the end of the day it's an open, free sound that you can sustain I don't think she has a huge problem, which is cool, you know… It's a flexible, growing relationship with her ideas on technique, which is great.

As Jennifer talks, I become increasingly aware of her tenacity and determination to succeed, and I wonder if her current diamond-hard resolve will continue throughout her career.

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Lesson excerpt: teacher as mentor

It is late in the semester and the two have been discussing Jennifer's results from a large singing competition she entered a little earlier in the year. "I got through to the final!" Jennifer announces. They talk about her results in the competition and whether Jennifer's place in the final was justified. Deborah says, "You got there by true merit! Well! It's very exciting!" Deborah smiles at Jennifer. "Oh! I also have to ask you about this other competition" says Jennifer. "I need four contrasting arias."

Deborah nods her head.

"So I chose He Israel, Il est Doux,"

"You'll just do four operatic ones?" interrupts Deborah.

"It said it could be from oratorio or whatever and some of mine were a little samey. They were all Romantic" explains Jennifer.

"Oh, ok."

"So that's why I chose the Mendelssohn, the Massenet, um, and then I …" Jennifer's voice dribbles off.

"But you've got four contrasted ones!", smiles Deborah, encouragingly. "You've got Per Pieta",

"I was waiting for that!" mutters Jennifer.

"You've got Il est doux, In Quelle and Steal Me!" Deborah lists the arie.

"Do I have to put the Mozart in?" Jennifer mutters again.

Deborah laughs.

Jennifer continues, "So that's right, I did Mendelssohn, Massenet, Steal me, and then I wanted to ask what you think was better, In Quelle or Io Son, which do you think was better for the Italian?"

"Oh, I *love* the way you sing In Quelle, but I'm just wondering if with an orchestra, oh, I don't know." Deborah seems unwilling to make a final decision.

"I honestly couldn't choose", says Jennifer.

"No, I'm just wondering what is better for a competition", muses Deborah.

"That's all I'm wondering", agrees Jennifer, "is whether because it would be last, so I didn't know whether after three quite substantial arias whether it was a nice little…because I mean Io Son is beautiful, but I didn't know whether it was as well known." Jennifer's confusion is evident.

"Oh, it *is* beautiful, and the ending is *quite* dramatic, isn't it?" enthuses Deborah.

"So I just thought I'd check with you before I put that in", Jennifer finishes.

Deborah confesses, "I'm not much help, I can't decide – they're both beautiful. Maybe we should sing Io son now… You're moving into a stage where there's going to be quite a few comps – are you going to Roseberry Creek Eisteddfods?"

"Yeah, I want to do that" agrees Jennifer.

"That's good, and there'll be others as well. Next year we'll put you in the MacDonald's Aria", predicts Deborah, thoughtfully.

They continue chatting about other concerns for quite a while, then, as they begin to discuss a production of Troilus and Cressida, Deborah says suddenly, "that's an aria we might explore for you, next year, but your voice might be a bit beautiful for that. It's a *great* aria, you'd *love* it. "How shall I sleep", or something. It's Walton. It's a great aria, and it has this big–Deborah sings a dramatic phrase, accompanying herself with the vocal line on the piano–that's the final phrase, goes to a top C, it's great! We should look at that maybe".

"Okay! Maybe as my final recital aria. Pencil that in now!" laughs Jennifer.

"Get everyone to back up a few rows!" Deborah chuckles.

They discuss exam repertoire for a while longer and then Jennifer begins to sing.

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Commentary: the journeyman

In this excerpt we see Deborah's mentoring of Jennifer as a near-professional, even as Jennifer is in only the second year of her studies. Chat regarding aria choice and other aspects of operatic culture is frequently observed in the later lessons, and Deborah is very encouraging and complimentary of Jennifer's voice. Jennifer seems well scaffolded into the classical singing culture and the discussion they have is one of a mentor and mentee, friendly and almost collegial. We hear the casual compliments Deborah pays to Jennifer's voice quality, and the gentle push she is giving Jennifer about making her own decisions, encouraging Jennifer to show even more autonomy. We hear the encouragement she gives Jennifer about her future, the goal setting for future competitions, songs and exams, getting Jennifer to think to the years ahead. The discussion they have and consequent decisions made are a negotiated outcome and it appears that Deborah has moved from didact to cultural advisor.

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Jennifer: on the journey

A full year later, Jennifer and I are once again meeting at the Con in an unattractive practice room, beige and drab. But this meeting feels different from the first one. Jennifer comments, before I have a chance, that it must be weird for me, as I must feel like I know her really well, given that I have been looking at the video data all year. I laugh and reply in the affirmative–it does feel weird! Jennifer is warm, open and chatty and as I set up the recording equipment she talks about her success in the competitions she entered the previous year. She made the finals of all, winning encouragement awards in one particularly prestigious competition.

Going into that limbo

Having successfully auditioned for a major role in this year's student opera, she has deferred her major study for a year. This is providing her with an excuse not to enter into "limbo"–the space between study and employment–just yet.

> I think it's a huge opportunity and could be a really vehicle for finishing up tertiary, going into that limbo, you know, and you want to do a good job, obviously! It's gonna be big. It's a big sing, and it'll be good!

Jennifer talks about how she prepares for such a big role, and how she ensures she is able to maintain her voice until the final aria, which is the finale of the opera.

> I think it's gonna be a matter of pacing and being able to technically approach things because it's so emotional. I think if you're just riding on the emotion all the time, you'll just blow yourself out pretty early on. Because you have to sing all the way through, and then the end, which is just basically screaming off top Cs for ages and ages, it's big, so if you don't pace yourself properly, and technically everything is in the right spot, you'll be stuffed by the time the aria comes and everyone'll be disappointed. You know, you really want to have enough in the tank that you can really go for it at the very end.

Jennifer is talking with a clear understanding of the elements of stage performance and technical approaches to the role. It appears her journey from amateur to professional is nearly complete.

A life-changing thing

Jennifer has plans to enter many competitions in the following year, and will complete her undergraduate degree then. Despite her understanding of how to pace herself in her current operatic role, she feels not yet ready to fully trust her technique.

I'd love another year–I don't think I'm quite ready just yet. Especially, having just lost like thirty kilos, support is completely misaligned, it's totally different. The voice is still the same. In a way, Deborah and I think I'm actually singing better, more efficiently. I feel healthier and fitter and have more energy overall, but the support–because there's not bits that used to be there–is totally different. And I feel different as a person, and I approach things differently, and you know, it's a life-changing thing, so I just need another year, to just consolidate that, and also to plan the next step.

Jennifer has lost a substantial amount of weight, which was a task she had set herself at the time of the last interview. This appears to have impacted her approach to breath and management support, and has unsettled her somewhat. She feels the rigors of the operatic profession may be too great for a technique which is still settling. Jennifer feels her rapid weight loss has not impacted on her vocal tone or quality but that her support is in flux.

I haven't noticed any lack of power, or sound or anything. There's been nothing changed there. It's been simply trying to reconfigure how we approach the support, that's the only thing. That's been weird. It feels weird, because it's been quite quick, too. It's only been six months and because I'm still changing, I've still got a way to go, to my goal.

To me Jennifer is much slimmer and younger looking than she was the previous year. I had never thought of her as particularly large, but now she looks slender to me, thin enough for her strong frame. Jennifer is candid about the problems she claims still to have in her technique now that she has lost weight. She demonstrates with her shoulder as she explains one such issue and we laugh about the poor habits that persist in our singing.

Just where I feel it it's different, when you breathe, well, there's less fat there and so the release is completely different. I sort of have this feeling almost, of like, not drowning, but not feeling like I have enough air–when the lung capacity's still the same, it's just actually making sure the abdominal wall is really relaxed. And honestly because I think I work out with a trainer four times a week, and we don't do strictly abdominal–

I unwisely interrupt: *Four times a week?!* Hard core…! Jennifer grins. *Hard core–that's crazy talk!* I exclaim. The ongoing determination of this young woman to develop her voice,

mind AND body in her quest to become a professional opera singer is clear more than a year after her first interview.

> That's where all my money goes. But I don't feel like this is as unset as it was… Because you think, big voice, it's always you know, a really energetic support system, but if you have a different shape, that can actually be working against you and creating tension, in the back and in the front, that is creating a little bit of, you know, instability here [she points to her throat].

The motor-learned pedagogical approach that Deborah has developed seems to work well for Jennifer, who appears to understand the role of her changing physiology on her technical and artistic development.

She can't trust me just yet

Jennifer acknowledges she is not yet ready to enter the profession because of this unsettled technique, but that Deborah is also uncertain about how her technique might stand up against the advice of other professionals.

> Deborah says she can't trust me just yet, to go out on my own and be self-sufficient and fix things on the run, because I think that's really hard. And I don't think I know myself or my voice quite enough yet to be able to do that. I need another set of ears…

> Before you go out and you're exposed to coaches and repetiteurs and new teachers and directors and conductors and stuff, who will want to change things, and you need to be able to adapt but also able to stick to what you know, and be able to know what's best for you, and I just don't feel quite there yet.

Jennifer has become aware of the requirements of the professional opera world outside of the walls of the Conservatorium. I wonder how much of this is counselling by Deborah, or a mirroring of Deborah's values and beliefs about the singing world, and how much of this is knowledge Jennifer has gleaned from observation and hearsay. Nevertheless, she wants to audition for major opera companies and begin to develop her professional career. She is somewhat self-effacing about her ability to do this and reveals a moment of uncertainty about her potential.

> I'd love to do an OA audition next year, and see how I go. That sounds so stupid! Because I don't think I'm good enough, but we'll give it a crack. You've just got to give it a crack, hey?

I am surprised that she has doubts about her ability even after being a finalist in major national competitions, and I remind her of her wins.

A killer attitude

Jennifer admits Deborah has been frank about her potential.

> I think she'd be honest with me. I don't think she's the sort of teacher to tell somebody that they can do something that she doesn't feel that they can. She's very honest. And I think she would have told me a few years ago if I maybe should look at something else. Because she's seen how I struggle financially, and mentally with the whole thing. That's probably the question mark, I think, I worry about myself, is that I'm strong enough to do it, because I think you have to have a certain personality, to survive.

Jennifer has revealed a level of trust in Deborah intrinsic to how the two have been working over the last three years–without this trust I wonder if Jennifer would have abandoned her changing technique at the first sign of instability, as she revealed in her first interview. Despite her own drive and level of commitment, she believes the sort of personality required to survive in the opera world requires something more.

> I think you have to really be, not driven, but like, it's all consuming, you have to have a really thick skin, it's almost like a killer attitude in a way. It just seems you have to have this aloofness with people, and not get too close, and not trust. It seems a very lonely existence, because the people you spend most time with at the end of the day are your competitors.

Renee Fleming (2005), Jerome Hines (1983) and others have written about the loneliness of the travelling singer, and the determination they had to possess to maintain such a lifestyle. Jennifer displays a similar determination despite her self-doubt and I wonder if her self-effacing attitude is a hangover from her first undergraduate experience or whether she is displaying a "tall poppy" syndrome characteristic of many Australians where they underplay their talent and ambitions.

I don't like people being mean to each other

Jennifer talks about her voice and identity and her comments echo her views of the year before, although now she rather resignedly talks about the few teachers in her institution who have refused to acknowledge her ability.

> Your voice is such a personal thing, it's unique to you, it's yours, you can't change it, and if someone criticises your voice, it's very easy to think that they're criticizing you!

There's certain teachers here, that I think, "no matter what I did, or how well I'd sung it, you would still hate me, you would hate what I do, and you would hate my voice".

Jennifer has been the target of some criticism from peers and staff throughout her studies, which has impacted on her feelings of self-worth. She admits, wryly, I didn't really have any friends for the first year, which was fun.

Um, it was pretty tough, you know. You can always say, "oh they're just jealous or they're this"–I don't think it was that. I think I was just different and my voice is different to theirs. I think they felt that maybe sometimes I was getting special treatment, or something like that.

At one point she had to see the harassment officer because of poor treatment by her peers and at another point she misguidedly tried to change some vocal technique in response to the criticism, which created problems in her voice.

There was certainly a backlash, and my voice actually declined. Because I was really scared, people were saying that I pushed, people were saying that I was trying to make tone and I was this and I was that, so there was a point where I was like trying to pull back and be very delicate…

Deborah has not mentioned this in her appraisal of Jennifer's technical development, although her comments about how students develop at different rates seems to echo Jennifer's own journey.

Throughout this time Jennifer's official accompanist recommended she learn more than forty arie over the course of a single year. She created other problems and criticised Jennifer during their sessions together. Jennifer struggled to cope under what she perceived was an ongoing onslaught of disapproval.

There were points where I literally didn't want to come to school because I know I'd have to have a session with her. I was terrified. She told me things like "you'll never have a career, you've got a hole in your voice, you're this, you're that". She would absolutely just tear me to shreds. I think she thought she was doing me good, or something. She would tell me that the teachers thought that I was regressing, and all this sort of stuff, really negative, negative stuff.

Jennifer had to insist to the faculty that this staff member and she could not sustain a working relationship, and she was assigned another accompanist. Then, in her third year,

Jennifer successfully auditioned for the lead role in the faculty's student opera. This opportunity has brought its own issues. Jennifer confesses,

> I'm a bit of a softy. Things do affect me. I'm very sensitive, not in a "I don't like being criticised", because I think it's really important, but I don't like people being mean to each other, and I don't like the negativity that surrounds the place sometimes. It can really bring me down… We're supposed to be colleagues, and I've noticed since I got the role, that people treat me way differently…There was a little bit of a tense time, straight after the cast was announced, that I had a few lunches by myself! But things seemed to have settled down a little bit now. But, you know, that's normal, isn't it?

Jennifer's experiences at the institution have not been altogether positive and her resilience appears remarkable as she recounts some more harrowing life experiences that might have negatively impacted on someone less able to withstand hard knocks. Her frank appraisal of the treatment by her peers suggests that the Conservatorium environment is not always the safe and supporting haven a student might expect, rather unexpectedly–at least to me–mirroring the uncertainty and competitiveness of the opera world.

No one has a manual on how to be an opera singer

As we talk about her options Jennifer comments, "No one has a manual on how to be an opera singer, ABCDEFG, talk to this person, do this, go to this, this! Literally just pick your way through and hope you don't stuff up too badly!" Nevertheless, Jennifer is being ably supported by a core group of teachers and lecturers throughout this transition period between being a student and becoming a professional.

She is momentarily bleak as she talks about her prospects and the difficulty of making a career out of opera. I sense the difficulty she has in trying to create a professional singer identity, so different to her initial interview, where she was still in novice singer mode. I remark as we chuckle together, *I'm thinking, this is a girl who's right at the end of her university life, she wants some answers, and they're not forthcoming.* Jennifer laughs,

> Yeah! It's hard, it's hard, and the thing is, I'm somebody who does have a reasonably good voice. I'm feeling a little down about it. But, you know, I love it, I love to do it, I want to be a singer, I don't want to do anything else, but how do you do it? It's so hard!

We chat about career options that might be possible alongside performing, including teaching singing, and I get the sense that the commitment and perseverance Jennifer needs to

succeed may have receded just a bit as she becomes more aware of the pitfalls of a performance career.

That's just the way it is

Jennifer talks about how she might approach her repertoire and roles as a professional, deciding with Deborah to make some changes to her Fach and choice of characters and roles and to stay in the full lyric repertoire. This was partly to protect her voice and partly because she felt she was too young to sing Wagner.

> At the end of last year we started to move into a little more of the young dramatic stuff, and it's fine, you know, I can sing it. But it is massively taxing, and, you know, I think maybe it's better to stay within stuff that is very comfortable, easy, doesn't tax the voice too much. To try and have some sort of longevity, and it moves into that [dramatic] stuff later on then that's cool, so that was sort of a good lesson to learn.

More than that, Jennifer's substantial weight loss has allowed her to consider roles she might otherwise have avoided due to her size. She now connects with the full lyric roles such as Mimi from La Boheme.

> Mimi's very comfortable, and I think now that I've lost weight–actually that's what the catalyst was for losing weight. I said to Deborah, "at 110 kilos, who is going to cast me as a Mimi, as a Tosca, as anything?" Nobody's going to cast me as a lyric looking like this. And that's the way it is. Because you look at the lyrics now, they look like models, they're gorgeous! They are! And that was something that really was the catalyst of "I did this to get jobs." To be more employable. And I feel more like a lyric now: I feel like I could sing a Mimi or a Tosca or whatever's going, Rusalka. I would feel more comfortable going for that role now, than before, when I was a big heffo.

I am shocked by her statement about her weight and concerned that she has fallen victim to a view that opera singers now need to be glamorous, thin, and beautiful to succeed in today's market. She continues,

> I feel that's really been an important step in trying to realise that this is a profession where that sort of thing happens, unfortunately. I think it's pretty sexist in a way, I don't think they're as harsh on men, but from everybody I've talked to, especially [on] the German circuit, they're very looks orientated. And women, their Mimis have to look like Mimi. And they want their women to look a certain way, and that's just the way it is. I guess that's just the way it is.

Anecdotally comments like this are common (see Miller, 1986; McAllister, 2011), although research has not been undertaken that examines perceptions of singer physicality and appearance within the opera profession (Oakland, 2013; O'Bryan, 2014). Jennifer and Deborah seem to have a shared understanding about what it takes to survive in opera and a rather fatalistic sense of the physical requirements to pursue opera. I wonder if Jennifer's love of singing has made way for a rather more utilitarian pursuit of such a career, as it inevitably must once she becomes a commodity in the crowded opera marketplace.

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Deborah: building the professional singer

A package

The same day, I am once again talking with Deborah in her office about Jennifer's current development. Deborah speaks of Jennifer with the sense that she is now a saleable commodity, with increased consolidation and consistency in her vocal technique and overall production.

> Now she's starting to turn into what I'd call a package. You know what I mean, there's a lot more beauty in the sound, there's less of the hit and miss type of things, there's a lot more general consistency, and she's being, now, able to incorporate a lot more of the artistry and those elements.

For Deborah, the ability for Jennifer to have an instinctual feel for the stage is imperative to a career in opera, but that a year ago Jennifer may not have demonstrated that instinct. She tells an account of a solo concert Jennifer had performed the previous semester.

> In the first half of the year, in May when she sang a concert with the orchestra she was very, very good. Really good, I was *so* proud of her, and she was excited too, but her voice just soared over the orchestra, and it was so right for that genre, I was amazed and you could see that look come over her face, like, you know, the initial nerves come over in the first couple of bars, and then she just got this look of "oh!". Really being in command. In her place. It's very exciting, actually, when you see that in a student. So, she's got a certain instinct, at least *that* was revealed to me in that performance that night. And that was exciting, and I thought well, you know, she probably couldn't have done that, maybe not even twelve months ago.

I hear Deborah's quiet pride in her student's success, tempered by an appraisal of Jennifer's technique. Deborah considers Jennifer's development to be a holistic one that incorporates vocal technique, artistic prowess, improved self-confidence, and command of her environment.

She's starting to really OWN her singing

She's starting to really *own* her singing and recognise quickly if she's not really doing things the way she needs to. I think she's in a really good place now, and really now, too, she's starting to become someone who has increasingly few limitations within her Fach, so she's got a whole lot of repertoire she can look at now, and really there's not much that is a problem.

Deborah's careful, thoughtful assessment of her student takes into account Jennifer's improved vocal technical proficiency, her improved self worth, and her future potential as a full lyric soprano. Deborah is more than a teacher; she has become a conduit for networks that might not otherwise be available to Jennifer if she were to try and access them on her own. While Deborah was helping Jennifer develop her voice, she was also helping her develop a much-needed foothold into the professional operatic space. Through Deborah's encouragement and mentorship, Jennifer has become aware of networks able to help her realise at least some of her ambitions. In a way, Deborah is doing more than just teaching a craft. She is inculcating students into opera in all its modalities.

Fire in the belly

Deborah can see the time when Jennifer will move on from their lessons together.

I think she's thinking of it in terms of when she'll feel comfortable about having less contact with me. I personally think she's moving towards that really quite well, I can see that coming. She wants us to feel like there's another twelve months or so, just not quite too far!

Deborah seems to be cultivating a seamless transition for Jennifer into the profession, which includes competitions and auditions; a way of cutting the "apron strings" of dependency by the student to the teacher. Her teaching role has changed from didact to mentor. I comment, *I do sense that she's quite committed.* Deborah agrees.

She had to really slog it out and work for a long time before she could even move to town, and think about taking up studies, so it means that she really wants it, and she does have days where she's got no money. And she does have days where she'll say,

"maybe it's all just way too hard", you know because she just gets weary of that. But I think she's got the fire in her belly, and I think she will find a way.

She's able to tick the boxes

Deborah talks about Jennifer's improved self-confidence, which she sees as partially due to her weight loss, but which also may have impacted in other ways.

She lost about twenty kilos, so she's worked very very hard, she may have even lost more than that, I don't know. So that has really impacted her, probably more psychologically than anything, and at first we had to do the bit about "will it affect my voice?", "can you hear this?", "does it sound different?", and all that, but in actual fact I think she's singing better, because she can really feel her support now much more, and she is generally a bit healthier.

Deborah and Jennifer have made similar observations about Jennifer's voice and weight, and Deborah is showing how well she seems to understand Jennifer's psychology.

I think she had been told by a few people when she would sing things like Mimi and things they'd say "of course, you'll never sing Mimi" so I think that did spur her on a bit, and now I just want to make sure she doesn't get TOO thin, because she's getting a thrill out of losing… I think for her now, now that she's matching her look, to her voice, she's really going, "oh goody, now I really am, this full lyric" or whatever and she's able to tick the boxes.

She's finally feeling confident

Deborah perceives Jennifer's improving psychological health translates into all areas of her life, not just being able to match voice to body and operatic roles.

She is feeling really excited about how she is now. That's been really nice to see, that she's really finally feeling confident. Because I think she probably thought she was exceedingly unattractive. I think that was probably it. So we see it translating into all avenues in her life. Much more confident. It's very interesting. Because the choices they make, their friendships, their relationships, when they're in that negative bit, you know, are just so very different from the ones when they finally get a bit of self worth.

Deborah's perceptive insight into Jennifer's personality and character has been honed over the years through close contact in the one-on-one lesson, within an institution that seems to build supportive networks for transitioning para-professional singers. Deborah takes a slight back seat as to her involvement in Jennifer's transformation, aiming to be the objective

observer and identifying her student's journey as one where Deborah has had impact only on the voice. This is at odds with Jennifer's perception that her teacher has been supportive, caring and has assisted her in times of emotional unrest.

That's not chat. That's discussion

We watch some excerpts of the videos and Deborah explains her approach to some of the vocal concepts. I ask her about the chat throughout the series. She exclaims,

> Oh, that's good. That's not chat. That's discussion. And it's how we establish the whole atmosphere of the lesson because it looks like chat but I'm watching her, I'm getting a sense of what sort of mood she's in or if she's, you know, well.

Most of Jennifer and Deborah's discussions concern opera culture, future study plans, competition and eisteddfods, appropriate dress on stage, other teachers and singers. Rarely do the conversations veer outside common operatic or musical interests.

A particular stage as a teacher

One particular technical exercise stands out on the recording. *"You talk about the 'smile, pucker, yawn, tongue forward'. That's a Neil Semer [exercise], isn't it?"*

> Yes, when Neil Semer visited the year before last, he designed that exercise for Jennifer. So it's a portamento exercise, but Neil Semer has this recipe for open throat. As it were, and he asks singers to smile with their lips together, and to yawn inside without opening your mouth, then you pucker and then put the tongue forward.

I experiment with this technique as Deborah explains it. That's it. You've got it! We laugh together, because it feels uncomfortable. Deborah explains that the technique is easy to unpack but that it has positively affected Jennifer's progress. The exercise proved pivotal to Jennifer's technical development.

> Just the use of portamento in her singing generally, really helped for her to really experience legato and consistent connection to her support. So for her she was at the stage where she could recognise when she was doing that, and for her it created more line, more consistency, better support, so that was a really quite pivotal lesson for her to have that experience.

Deborah has further developed the exercise, taking on new concepts and learning from other teachers, building new techniques into her own practice and gearing specific

pedagogical techniques for different singers, according to their needs. I comment, *so you've taken what you learnt in that lesson and-*

> Yeah. Reinforced it, because it worked for her and because I could use aspects of that. Again, you always have to incorporate it into your own work because it's easy for that to create a whole new set of tensions, and I think unless you're a particular stage as a teacher it can be very dangerous, because you walk away with one little tiny piece of the puzzle, which you then attach to all of your students, whether it suits them or not.

I like to go on being a learner

Deborah's ongoing development of vocal pedagogy skills through learning from others is mirrored in her own singing. Deborah continues her learning through singing lessons or coachings: I like to go on being a learner, and if I have a coaching or something, I invite my students so that they can see that I'm still learning. I am surprised by her openness. *Is that confronting though, for you?* Deborah laughs, and confesses

> I never have found it to be, until [my coach] said to me one day "oh, you're brave doing that", and I'd never thought of it that way, and then I felt really uncomfortable! Up until then I thought it was quite healthy, but anyway I think if we still stay in touch with what it is to learn we've got a better idea of helping them be learners, and really that's kind of what it's all about.

I remark that perhaps singing teachers are only now coming round to the idea that continual learning is important for the profession, and that learning about the vocal mechanism and the mechanics of singing might actually be a good thing. Deborah agrees, confirming comments she made in her first interview.

Teaching as a response to the way that we were taught

> Well it's just that bit where we're slowly breaking through bit by bit, the cycle of 'teaching as you were taught', and the same omissions in the knowledge being perpetuated. And I think that is *it*, I think we *are* teaching as a *response* to the way that we were taught, perhaps.

Gaunt's 2008 study confirms previous research that found many teachers teach as they themselves were taught, which she noted was both a source of frustration to them and a source of comfort. Deborah is responding to the way she was taught by changing her approach, and thinking reflexively about singing teaching. Deborah refuses to teach only through imitation or imagery–every concept is grounded in vocal physiology and a motor-learned approach, and for Jennifer in particular, she has been instrumental in developing the

whole performer, from vocal technical development, to Fach and role selection, to guiding Jennifer's transformation into a full-lyric soprano with the body to match.

I'd rather have one you put together a bit

I mention that what I think I am seeing in Jennifer's data and this particular case is *time*. The time needed to develop Jennifer's voice, the wait she had before entering the institution and the size of the instrument that meant a long development phase not prescribed by the institution. Deborah thinks for a moment.

> It's partly that. I mean, she really didn't have a technique, either, if she continued to sing the way that she was singing then it wouldn't have been such a usable package. Because it was really unbalanced, it had fast vibrato and tuning issues, so it has been a case for her of building technique, but of course having an instrument to begin with is a huge advantage.

Deborah notes that Jennifer's journey has been about assimilating the knowledge and skills necessary to hone the voice, building Jennifer's voice from one without technique to one with the solid flexible technique needed to support a long term career. Deborah enjoys the process of building voices.

> I'd rather have one you put together a bit. I find that a really interesting process, and very rewarding. And I think they make better singers in the long run, because they've had to do it that way. That's the thing that I hope, with someone like Jennifer; what I'm hoping for her is a long career. And I hope there's at least the beginnings of a foundation. And I say the beginnings because we have to constantly revisit the basics, you know. But it *is* rewarding, it *does* make a difference. You forget that with a *real* voice, there's so many things there that acoustically are just all so wonderful, that are all *there*.

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Many of Deborah's students are making inroads into the international opera scene. They are winning substantial prizes, gaining scholarships and building careers that are impressive to the observer. It is exciting to observe her success in teaching these young opera performers, and I can only speculate that the holistic approach she takes in guiding their career must be a successful one. More than just the development of vocal technique, Deborah seems to be inculcating her students into the profession in a way that ensures a singular level

of preparedness. I can't help but envy some of her students for having such a teacher so early in their careers.

In 2013 I have seen Jennifer perform several times. Each time she sings she seems a little closer to taking her place in the small pantheon of Australia's employed opera singers. Her beautiful, strong, steely soprano voice, painstakingly built piece by piece, step by step, is bright with possibility. I hope she succeeds.

Notes on the narrative.

Chapter Seven provides a discussion on the findings of the narrative account above and links them to the theoretical framework outlined in the literature review.

Chapter Five. A way forward

Mark and his student Vanessa are from a regional university in a town called Middleborough. There are two flights a day into the region on a budget carrier, followed by a thirty minute drive to the town centre. My flight in early 2010 arrives fifteen minutes behind schedule. After collecting my bag I dash outside the terminal and discover to my dismay that the only local bus into town is pulling away from the bus stop with the next not due for two hours. My interview with Vanessa is in ninety minutes. My only alternative is an expensive private bus or taxi ride into town. As I sit rather disconsolately at the bus stop, a young woman sits down beside me, having also missed the bus, and we agree to share a taxi ride to spread the cost. By what seems extraordinary coincidence, she is one of Mark's first year singing students. As we drive, we chat about her singing and music studies. She is positive about Mark's teaching approach and chats happily about the various singing activities at the Music faculty. This conversation, I feel, bodes well for my visit. We arrive in town, part company and I continue to the university.

Vanessa: masks and habits

Vanessa suggests we hold the interview in a nearby cafe, which is located on the high street. She is in her second year of a Bachelor of Music degree and has learnt singing from Mark for two years. At the time of the first interview she is twenty, lives near uni in a townhouse with two friends and works at the local supermarket four days a week. She is originally from a small town some distance from the uni and regularly travels home on weekends to see her family.

I always sang, and I just loved it, and I was good at it

Vanessa became interested in singing from a young age and her family are heavily involved in music making, through a variety of European-heritage music associations and choral societies. Vanessa learned piano for about seven years from the age of five, and during this time she became interested in singing lessons. I always sang, and I just loved it, and I was good at it, so that's always a plus, um and, yeah, my parents always encouraged me to sing and so, I just continued doing it.

Vanessa learnt singing from three teachers during her secondary schooling but only one had qualifications in voice, and two doubled as her piano teacher. Her musical education was sporadic, as her teachers all moved out of the region.

While she claims this was difficult, she is at pains to point out that each teacher teaches differently and so it was kind of hard when they moved away, but it was good for my musicality, I would say. They were great teachers, they encouraged me to sing and they were there, but left me to my own devices as well. I had a few years where I just didn't have a singing teacher, and just went off what I used to do and taught myself, really, how to do it.

Vanessa's tenacity to keep learning music seems encouraging.

A lovely happy lady

There wasn't one particular moment that got Vanessa into considering singing as a career, but one singing teacher who gave her some encouragement.

She actually got me into classical singing and she gave me this idea of going into classical singing and I just fell in love with it… I started with her when I was about sixteen, she was an old opera singer, she was in her late seventies when I started with her. Yeah, and she just had this love for music and classical music and so she got me listening to the old music and singing it and trying different styles instead of just contemporary styles that I'd been doing up until then.

Vanessa speaks warmly of this woman who broadened her musical horizons.

She'd always give me a compliment, at least one compliment that made me feel good no matter what I, whenever I came in, she was just a lovely happy lady, and it was just, you couldn't help but feel happy, even when she yelled at you, you couldn't help but feel happy!

This is a positive memory of a cherished teacher, I think. I ask, *would she yell at you often?* Vanessa smiles, admitting, oh, a couple of times, it was more of a "you didn't practice enough" and stuff like that, but she just… she was really nice, and she… I don't know if it was more yelling or "I'm still disappointed in you" which could be worse, but she was brilliant.

Vanessa didn't appear to practise enough as a school student and she seems to have reacted poorly to criticism about her work practices. Her teacher nevertheless kept her motivated during illness at a crucial time.

I went through a hard time–I got sick with glandular fever and so that took a lot out of me, because it was just before year eleven and twelve. She was there always motivating me when I wasn't feeling well, she was like, just "well, give it a try", and so just keep on cheering [me] on…

It seems Vanessa had a sporadic musical education, due to illness and inconsistent access to teachers in her region. I suspect she has missed a basic foundation in developing important craft skills and dispositions at a time when she needed it most.

Falling back into old habits

Vanessa feels the power of music can facilitate an emotional response in her audience. She indicates that giving the audience a part of herself is an aspect of the experience of music making, explaining I guess sometimes I make the songs a little too personal, but I try as I might to put as much emotion and true feeling into it as possible.

I want her to clarify what she means by "too personal". Well I guess, you can put too much emotion into a song and it destroys your singing and, or your style of singing, but it's, it's an interesting balance you have to find and I've experimented a lot with it to try and find this correct balance. Finding "balance" I initially understand as meeting the technical and emotional demands of the music, which can be undermined by performance anxiety. It's not just the technical vocal demands that Vanessa is referring to but the demands of her audience as well. I wonder if she is rather obliquely referring to being overcome with nerves when performing, which she confirms.

You tense up, so your breathing is out, and then I have a horrible, horrible trait of aspirating, when I sing, so it's one of things that I'm really constantly working on to try and get over, and, very very conscious of when I'm singing. Falling back into old habits is one of the dangers, I think, once you get on stage you see this, and this sort of fear takes over…

Masks any mistakes

Vanessa explains how she feels poor habits start, feeling her teachers offer contradictory advice, and then in performance she retreats into old comfortable behaviours, due in part to lack of confidence in performance preparation.

I think it could be… different teachers saying different things, and then you kind of go, "well actually I feel more comfortable doing this", and then you just do what's

comfortable. I've discovered a lot of my aspirating is more lack of confidence in what I'm singing, because, like, when I don't know the notes properly I fall back into this sort of aspirating thing, this works, it's not quite…masks any mistakes that could happen…

Confusion about technical instructions may also affect her vocal technique if she does not have the experience or confidence to determine which instructions are right for her, but I am concerned about her comment that she "masks" mistakes with poor technique, which I suspect compounds the problem.

They know you did that wrong

Vanessa fears poor audience opinion, particularly from her peers, although she is at pains to point out that they wouldn't be mean to her.

I know my peers really well, and I know that they would never say a nasty word to me out of… they'd give me constructive criticism but they'd do it out of love… they're not going to judge you and think less of you because you've sung a wrong note. But there's still this all of a sudden, mental fear that just goes, they know you did that wrong.

I sense Vanessa harbours an intense fear of failure, which can be crippling for the classical musician, given the requirements of near-perfect musicianship and vocal technique and when facing a highly critical audience. She concurs, viewing opera as the pinnacle of achievement in singing, which requires perfect technique and few errors. If you get to opera, you're there, you've made it, sort of thing, and I don't know, I think it's maybe my own mental perception of it: it's harder to mask mistakes in opera than in contemporary singing or jazz.

They just don't really think about things they've done, the uni

Vanessa's life consists of work, uni, and church, so it's just all put into one, and so it's not a lot of time to do a lot else. She is at uni five days a week, and I work four days a week, so I don't often get a day off. She admits to difficulty in balancing work, social and uni life. She spends time on weekends with her family, but a lot of the time I go I've got half an hour from work to uni, so just sit. Just relax, 'cos I don't get a lot of time to just sit and relax and just go–sigh–breathe before I'm rushing off here, rushing off there!

Vanessa has mixed feelings about her experiences at university, although she says the lecturers are always willing to help, and even her peers understand what she's going through, but they have their moments where they just don't really think about things they've done, the uni.

Vanessa characterises university processes as an all encompassing "they". I reason that she means administrative processes of the university are sometimes amorphous and impersonal, and that decisions made via these processes don't always take into account the needs of the student. Vanessa says, rather vaguely:

> I think a lot of the issues is lack of communication in the organization itself... People are either too busy or they don't care to reply, and it just makes all confusing for the students who are sitting here going, "well what do we have to do?" Sort of thing.

I don't really know what she means and can only assume that something has affected Vanessa's study. I do not ask her to elaborate, asking her instead about her current year level. She explains she is entering her second year, but that she had to redo one of her principal studies due to illness and stuff, which took her an extra semester. Vanessa is withholding some information about something that has happened at uni, but I am not sure that I have gained her trust enough for her to tell me precisely what happened.

Too much time relaxing

Vanessa claims to be practising at least two hours a day, but when I ask her to articulate how she does this she admits,

> I don't get to practise as much as I want to, and I guess I spend a little too much time relaxing but, when I can, I have to, but I think this semester I've noticed I've gotten more motivated and practicing, and more motivated into getting it right, and going well, "I can relax when I'm older", I'm young now, so may as well do it now.

Vanessa offers contradictory claims about her practice regime and I wonder whether she is shaping for me her concept of an ideal student. I consider how her self-perception may differ from Mark's assessment of her and whether her apparent low motivation may affect her progress.

You don't really know it

Vanessa explains how singing lessons with Mark are shaped. Lessons appear to be based around learning her repertoire. I wonder if Mark gives Vanessa any technical work for her voice. Vanessa claims that he does, explaining

> usually we find different things that need to be worked on, like breathing... we try to go through two pieces a lesson or like in the earlier sections we go through one or two

…and just focus on it to really get it down pat, so I know what I'm doing, and then I can work on it.

She indicates the lessons take the same general approach each time and it sounds as if Mark consistently uses repertoire as a means of shaping vocal technique. I ask a slightly provocative question: *do you feel like you note bash, just to get those pieces embedded?*

A little bit, yeah, you just sit there going "I know this already, why isn't it going right?" and going, "oh ok" and going "I *know* I know this but why I am I having to sight-sing this?" and going, "well why am I sight-singing?" and then discovering that you don't really know it, you need to work on it even more.

This sounds like a student who does not know her music from week to week, and who hasn't yet accepted how much self-directed practice and hard work is involved in music training.

I love musical theatre

Vanessa lists her songs and says, for some reason this semester the theme seems to have a lot of melismas all through them. *Is that something you cope with, with your voice?* She falters. Um, yes, I think it's, I'm, well I'm getting there, more than, I'm doing more this semester than I've ever done, which I think is an interesting sort of curve, but it's a good learning thing, so, it's, it's–I'm enjoying it.

I wonder if she is really enjoying her songs at all but despite the halting response her tone is reassuring and serene. I ask her about her previous semester's repertoire and she mentions a musical theatre song, saying enthusiastically,

I love musical theatre, 'cos it's sort of a mix between the classical as well as the contemporary, it's sort of this inbuilt sort of thing, it just allows me a chance to go all out and not have this restriction, in a sense, like some of the classical pieces have…it can have all that twang that you want and all that nasal sound you want, because it's free and you're expressing it and the emotion of it and you're allowed to do that, which is always a nice feeling.

Her fluency and warm tone of voice is in contrast to her faltering comments about classical singing. Perhaps the classical repertoire she is singing is too demanding and perhaps too alien for Vanessa, despite her professed love of it.

I can survive this

Vanessa talks about how she perceives Mark's teaching approach. She speaks cheerfully enough, but her reply is guarded.

> I think it was interesting because I'd never had a male singing teacher, it came to me as a bit of an interesting mental thing going "oh… yeah that's fine", but um, it was mainly just working out the different ways he taught and how to–how I can get the most out of it and apply that to me in most ways. Like, our lessons are a lot of fun, I guess he tries to make it as relaxed as possible and tries to make me laugh as much as possible so I relax…

> I go in to my lesson, I could feel a little stressed, but just going, "well, you know what, I can survive this, if he yells at me, I can survive this" sort of thing, and I guess it's more developing inner confidence in yourself and going yeah, but I can do it. I guess it's the inner journey that every musician has that they have to have their own confidence and that developing that confidence also developed the ability to take in more that Mark teaches me, the ability to accept his criticism and all that.

The transition from beloved old female teacher to new male teacher has not been altogether easy for Vanessa, particularly with her comments about survival and coping with criticism, and her need to relax. As with her comments about her former teacher, Vanessa makes a comment about Mark "yelling" at her, which I suspect is more about her ability to accept criticism and make adjustments to her vocal technique than an actual occurrence. The issue of her self-confidence has again been raised. I ask her about the transition from her previous teacher to Mark. Vanessa's response is tentative.

> Um…it was different… it was kind of… it's a fairly long process to get to a different teacher and so then they can teach you to the best of their ability and you can learn from them… When you first meet someone you have to get to know them a bit, you have to work out their idiosyncrasies and who they are, before you can really sort of develop a sort of understanding; unspoken understanding about how you relate to each other, sort of.

I wonder if the unspoken understandings Vanessa refers to are present in her current communications with Mark and whether they have developed a language for learning.

We are the instrument

We discuss singer identity. Vanessa perceives singers to be different from instrumentalists.

> Instrumentalists, they have an instrument, they can hide behind that instrument, whereas singers kind of put it all out there, 'cause, we are what we sing, we are the instrument, we are the thing that's on display and the music that's being played…there's just so much singers have to do that instrumentalists don't quite understand, like we have to learn words, and notes, and a way to perform it, so people don't just sit there and watch this person just stand there, and so they can actually feel it.

Vanessa perceives that not only do singers embody their instrument, but they also have to memorise text and portray character, which she suggests requires different skills to that required of an instrumentalist. She indicates that singing is an exposed art form, both physically and emotionally, and that for her singing a role is a valuable way to express emotion.

> I know I'm an introvert, and I think a lot of singers are, because we need a way to express what's going on inside, and music tends to be our way out, and so, when we do sing, we don't express who we are, in a sense: we play a role, so we play someone else and we express what they're feeling instead of what we're feeling really, so it's a different sort of thing there.

Actors often talk of being able to hide behind their character, and Vanessa is making a similar observation. I wonder if Vanessa has portrayed characters at all in her sporadic musical experience, and whether she understands how vocal technique and skill will define the singer's portrayal of a role.

You start as a singer but you become a singer

Vanessa is uncertain about her options once her uni degree is finished. She shrugs her shoulders and smiles as she says, lightly,

> well, it's a constant question. I um, I've often thought of maybe doing honours, or um, hopefully maybe I'm going to do some scholarships and do some study over there, and um, just learn as much as possible and experience as much as possible, and try and become a singer! Make it!

Vanessa laughs. Our discussion about operatic careers ranges from singing in the chorus of Opera Australia to studying in Italy. I ask how she defines "becoming" a singer.

I think it's you, I think you start as a singer but you become a singer. Like, you can be a singer, it's weird, you have to get to a point where you're comfortable to say "I'm a singer, but that's what I do, that's who I am", sort of thing, and it's becoming more of an identity as a singer, and instead of just being a singer; I've become a singer.

Vanessa's difficulty in articulating the journey to "becoming" a singer is understandable. Not only is it about adopting a singer identity as part of one's inner self-identity, but the journey of "becoming" also involves intense training and skill development in order to realise this core singer identity. Even after training, "becoming" a singer may not occur until professional appointments occur on a regular basis. "It's what I do, it's who I am" speaks to the embodied nature of the instrument as well as to the long-term adoption of the singer role and accompanying profession. I wonder if she will attain her goal.

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Mark: constructing a learner

I meet Mark a little later at the university in his office studio on the fourth floor of the music building, a tired looking, warren-like building in need of redecorating. His room is a long, beige, narrow space, with rattly old casement windows all along one side. A grand piano is wedged in at one end and an office space comprising desk, computer and bookcase is at the other. We chat about the university and his prospects for a bit, and then head off to his house in a nearby suburb.

Mark is in his early forties and regularly performs in his specialist field. He is the recipient of a number of awards and his profile is well known, with many recordings and televised performances. I have listened to some of his recordings, and his voice is rich and smooth, with well-controlled vocal technique and a breathtaking capacity for managing both long phrases and fast melismatic runs. It is a lovely voice, revealing a sensitive musicality and stylistic elegance similar to many British singers.

Mark is a casual singing teacher at Middleborough University. When I first approached the university about his involvement in my study, he was employed full time. He now has only six hours of guaranteed work per week. There is limited likelihood of ongoing employment at the institution. Mark and his family moved from a capital city to

Middleborough in order for him to work at this institution, and are finding the unexpected transition to part-time work difficult to manage.

My first impression of Mark is of a resolute man. Off camera he offers some forthright opinions about Middleborough and university life and he holds strong opinions about a range of life matters, including politics and social commentary. I sense he is a man who does not take fools lightly, a man not easily impressed.

I just loved listening to music

I ask Mark to tell me about some of his early musical experiences, and how he got into singing. In a slow paced, measured tone, he recalls, my father had quite an extensive record collection, but interestingly enough there was very little – VERY little classical music at all and I don't remember ever really hearing any classical music at home… Nobody ever pushed all that music on me. Nobody ever pushed those records on me; there was something about those records that just–GOT me. That was quite an influential thing: I just loved listening to music.

Mark played his father's 1950s records on an old radiogram turntable, then, as he grew older, his music choices included Australian bands from the TV show Countdown. His mother was very interested in music, playing the piano and singing a bit, and it was a combination of his father's love of music and his mother's amateur engagement that enabled his interest to take root. Mark's early education in his selection of music as a career was unhelpful, partly, he claims, because I was a gimp at school, and didn't do anything! Also, he explains, there was no music at his school–his music interests had to be extra-curricular.

A terrible student

Mark talks of his first singing teacher during secondary school, an iconic figure in his hometown, who was a keen musician. *Did she make you work hard?* No, I don't think so. Not really, because I think she thought she would be wasting her time, because I was a lazy kid. I was very lazy! She probably recognised that she wasn't going to waste her breath because I was trying a bit, but coasting, I think that's what I was doing.

Mark seems unforgiving of his youthful self. I imagine Mark was really quite a reasonable student in his singing lessons and I wonder if Mark's early behaviour has had any bearing on his adult singing career, giving him something to work *against*. Mark doesn't appear to be a complete perfectionist, but I sense he works very hard at his craft. He confirms his work ethic. I was a terrible student. I've been making up for it over the last ten or fifteen

years! We chat further about his rather unedifying school life in country Australia for a while before I ask about his tertiary singing studies.

Mark gained admission to a tertiary music diploma course at a regional university far from his hometown, explaining when I finished school, I was such an appalling student, really just would have driven them up the wall, I was basically… mum said "well you're going to audition for this", music colleges, and so I did what I was told. I am curious about how he knew he was good enough to study singing given his poor school results, and he says, dismissively, oh, I had a singing voice. I had a voice, right from the beginning, but, you know, I did my best to do other things. It came pretty easily to me, I suppose, not too many things did, but that did.

Homesick, Mark frequently travelled several hundred kilometres to be with his family on weekends. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that he chose a regional university, even though he gained entry to the city Conservatorium's preparatory course, because he was uncertain about how he would fare in the bigger institution. He feels he was given significant performance opportunities that he would have missed had he gone to the city Conservatorium, given his age and vocal readiness, because there were many many singers there far better than me who would have been chosen for the roles, and fair enough, too. Nevertheless, his results at the end of his undergraduate diploma were poor, reflecting his lack of interest in his studies and his dislike of the town generally.

I was interested in what I was doing

After completing his diploma, Mark worked for a time in dead-end jobs, then, travelling overseas and living in London,

> it was only then that I grew up and realised that there was a whole world out there and that I needed to stand on my own two feet. And it was there that I realised that I actually really did love music and I wanted to learn a lot more about music… I went back to the uni for another year and I upgraded my diploma to a Bachelor's degree, and I got the marks, because I was interested in what I was doing.

Only after spending time overseas did Mark find the passion for singing that had been missing from his previous educational experiences, despite the encouragement of his mother. The independence that came with his overseas travel also informed his future choices about his studies. After upgrading his undergraduate diploma to a Bachelor of Music, he took postgraduate performance studies at the City Con, which he found significant because of his perception that the City was "THE place" for those wanting a performance career.

You have to have a very thick skin

Mark talks animatedly about his experience in an undergraduate faculty production and how after this experience he was definitely hooked on the stage. He admits while I really enjoyed it–I found it extremely difficult. I found it was very difficult dealing with my nerves, and that's been an ongoing thing for me. I ask why.

> Oh, it's very interesting thinking about what happens to your voice and what happens to your body under pressure, and it's a constant learning experience, so you can never successfully call yourself a singer, or you can never call yourself a successful singer unless you've actually tested yourself on stage in front of an audience in various capacities. Because it's so different going from the teaching studio to being under the lights and makeup and costumes and orchestra, you know.

Nerves still affect Mark, although listening to his performances and seeing him perform live, I am not aware of any effect on his vocal production, a sure sign of the consummate professional performer. Mark's performance career began in the 90s. He was accepted into an elite vocal ensemble and he worked with them for five years, despite the poor salary. He perceives this time as being extremely valuable.

> It was a really good learning experience for me because of the amount of music that they actually get through, and because of having nothing underneath you in terms of support. The actual music itself survived on the individual strengths of the singers in the group, so it became very important to be self sufficient and able to teach yourself things, and to hold your own part.

While in the group he built his discipline, self-sufficiency and work ethic and afterwards made use of networks and contacts as he built his performing career in his chosen musical style. He talks about the type of personality needed to succeed in such a career, emphasising self-sufficiency, perseverance and grit.

> I do think that people make their own luck, to a certain degree. You have to have the drive, you have to push yourself forward, you know, singing is not something that people without a thick skin can survive in, because critics and other musicians and conductors and artistic directors can be very confronting. And even dealing with your own individual psyche, you have to have a very thick skin, to survive as a singer.

Mark's performing career has been consistent, with the early experience in the vocal ensemble cementing his independent approach to learning and capacity for hard work. Looking at his website, with his many performance engagements mapped over the following

twelve months, it appears he has succeeded in building himself a viable part-time performing career, despite his belief that survival in this competitive industry is difficult.

You can only bring what experience you HAVE had

Mark got into teaching via the typical route of picking up various small teaching jobs here and there and has more than twenty years experience in singing teaching. I wonder if this has helped develop his expertise or whether performing has been a determining factor. He explains the importance of performing to teaching,

> You're always influenced by the events of your experience, but I do think that teachers without the benefit of extensive stage time are missing a serious element or component of singing… You can only bring what experience you HAVE had. So, I personally think it's extremely important.

Mark perceives singing teaching to be a relational process and admits: there is no single singing teacher that is right for every student. It does just not exist. That's unavoidable, because it's so personal… I wonder whether Mark needed to change teachers over differences in opinion or clashing temperaments and I ask whether his students are at times not respectful of his experience and expertise. Mark replies thoughtfully,

> I would put it down more to the fact that most of them are really coming from the same place I was coming from. So I can see their perspective very clearly. You know, where I am teaching now is a regional university and a lot of the students are you know, they don't have a lot of musical experience, they don't have the metropolitan musical background that the city conservatoires and universities have to draw on.

Mark's life experience and early years, it appears, has prepared him for teaching at a regional university, as he seems to understand the limited experience of his students.

Every singer and every student is different

Mark talks in depth about the process of singing teaching and about dealing with the personalities and insecurities of his young singers, particularly when there may be personal issues of which the teacher is unaware.

> You have to show that you respect the student and that you respect yourself and that you are leading by example and that you're not talking down to the student, but you are talking from a position of considerable experience and they have not had that experience that you have had, and neither can you expect that of them. So, you need to be very considered in what you say and within your approach.

He indicates that respect is a two way street and that experience of the teacher needs to be valued, while at the same time the opinions and needs of the student must be taken into account. He explains further:

> Every singer and every student is different and that's the greatest challenge for any singing teacher: dealing with the streams of students that come through the door, and every single one is different because they have something different that is driving them, and they have all those things–pressures, fears and other things you don't know about–driving them.

> But they also have this very personal thing inside them that is coming out, and you have to be very careful that you nurture that… It can be very easy for the relationship between the teacher and the student to be irreparably destroyed by the teacher jumping in where they should actually just step back, you know.

Mark's measured response about the importance of a nurturing, respectful relationship with his students is detailed and thoughtful, and in part informed by his experiences with his own teachers, who he claims were unfailingly respectful to him and who valued the art and craft of teaching.

The most deeply personal form of self-expression

Mark talks of the length of time needed to develop trust between student and teacher and of the embodied nature of singing. He perceives there is some difficulty in understanding and demonstrating internal physical sensations due to the level of self-expression that singers feel.

> It takes time for the student to develop trust, and it also takes time for the teacher to get a handle on where the student is at. So it's one of the reasons why singers generally take longer to develop. Not all the time, but often they take longer than instrumentalists to develop because it's the most deeply personal form of self-expression that you can possibly have as a musician. The singing voice generates inside your own body and it's governed by so many factors that are completely internal.

He believes singers need longer to develop than instrumentalists because of the physiological and personal development required of singers. Simultaneously building, learning to play, and being the instrument are complex processes that do not lend themselves to fast development (Chapman, 2006, p. vi). Also, as voices do not mature until singers are well into their twenties or thirties, voice building is ongoing. Mark also believes private one-

on-one lessons are vital to a singing student's development, partly because of the time it takes for the singer to develop confidence in their sound and technique.

> I know from teaching undergraduates that it's very hard to get them to make sound when it's just *them*. If you then put their student colleagues in the room, they're comparing their voices to the voices of other students as well as dealing with everything else they have to deal with and personally I find that type of pedagogy incredibly counter-productive.

Mark feels that learning singing requires a safe, private environment for the student to work in without fear or criticism from their peers, particularly in the early stages of their vocal education.

There's no one teacher that has led me to where I am now

I ask him about whether he asks students to leave his practice, which leads to a discussion about his dislike of guru teaching. Mark is not bothered by students who choose to leave his studio and states that students should experience a range of pedagogical approaches.

> The idea of hanging onto students is really dangerous, I think. For teachers and students, unfortunately, it happens a lot. I think students should be going to vocal coaches and all the rest of it because the input of only one person cannot make a wholly rounded singer. You have to have a range of pedagogical experiences.

> I can think of teachers who have promoted exactly that guru mentality and it's partly through their own self-consciousness. It's the need to feel vindicated by the student who goes on to become a star; that they–the teacher–were the ones that found or developed this student, and I don't think it should be like that. I studied in various places with a whole lot of people… and there are lots and lots of influences on my development that have led me to the point where I am now. If I think back to my training, there's no one teacher that has led me to where I am now.

Mark clearly dislikes guru teaching, as it is about the whole learning experience that has shaped his craft, including working with vocal coaches and other music professionals. I wonder if this is how he shapes his own approach to teaching, which he confirms.

It puts the impetus back on them

Mark explains his teaching approach is flexible and geared to the needs of the student, giving the student the power or opportunity to be pro-active, with input at the beginning of the lesson on how their practice has evolved during the week.

> It puts the impetus back on them, to give an opinion about what they want to do, or what direction they want to take, and then I take it from there, so I don't see that there's any way that I could have a set plan of running a one-to-one lesson. Everyone is different, because of that option I give to the student, and because the students themselves are very different.

In this approach the student must take responsibility for their learning, being self-directing and autonomous in decision-making. I wonder if this is the appropriate approach for some young students, who may need a more instructional approach in their early studies.

Despite the value he sets in the self-efficacy of his students, Mark gives all his students an information kit as a way of preparing them for the year ahead, convinced that they won't read it, but it makes me feel better because I've DONE it, and I've given it to them in a hard copy.

There isn't enough time

Like most singing teachers in tertiary education in Australian institutions, Mark teaches each student approximately fifty-minute individual lessons over twelve or thirteen weeks. The performance exam requirements become more onerous with each passing semester, including a thirty-minute recital in fifth semester and a forty-minute final recital. He explains, one of the things I try and stress is that there isn't enough time, and I won't spend any time warming up their voice. I give them some very, very quick things on vocal warm ups and I expect them to do it, to turn up ready to go.

Consequently, much time in the lesson is spent working on repertoire, with Mark setting goals for his students, as he finds with most students that's absolutely crucial. Because they simply do not have the music reading skills, and, in some cases, the initiative to keep moving forward. While Mark encourages his students to select their own repertoire because he hopes they will be motivated to actually learn it, most prefer him to select their repertoire. Mark keeps case-notes on each student, although he admits that I don't make a lot of notes week to week, simply because I don't have time. If I had more time, then I probably would, but I'm afraid I don't have the time or the energy to do that.

Mark, like many musicians, has a portfolio career and sees his many identities as performer, teacher, parent and student to be competing demands on his time, which he feels is exhausting.

Juggling everything

I'm juggling everything, juggling performing and other stuff. I don't really have a full time job–I have lots of jobs. I have a job as a singing teacher, and I have a job as a performer, and I have a job as a person doing a PhD and I have a job as a person who has kids, and all of those things take their own time, and all of those things together are extremely tiring. If I took out the performer job, and if I was just a teacher, the time that I spend at the beginning of each day within my own practice time: I would be doing something else, whether it be writing notes on students or writing papers, or whatever it was.

Mark's approach in teaching appears to mirror much of his approach to his own performance practice. He is methodical; he sets goals; he values autonomy and independence in learning and he believes that students need to be prepared, warmed up and self-directing.

Egg on the face

As he admits, however, not all of his students are autonomous in their learning and I sense a warning in his final words when he speaks of some at the students in his institution and their capacity to self-manage their commitments.

I would be very worried if I was doing a thirty-minute recital and six or seven weeks before hand I really had no idea of it… but that's what you get, that's what happens. And the whole idea of egg on the face at a public recital–for some of them it doesn't mean anything, so you just accept that and try and find a way that works.

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Lesson excerpt: a Sisyphean task

This lesson excerpt takes place some ten days before Vanessa's final exam, and it is her penultimate lesson for the semester. Vanessa has just entered the studio and is putting her music on the stand as Mark adjusts the video.

Mark asks Vanessa, "what's on the agenda today? Or do you just want to get through everything [for your exam]?"

"Pretty much", agrees Vanessa.

"Um, the order, you could do the exercises first or at the end" Mark muses.

"Um, I was thinking first, because then I'll know that I'm definitely warmed up!" she laughs.

"So the exercises first, then Concone, and the three pieces", confirms Mark.

"Two pieces", corrects Vanessa. "Because we discovered I only needed to do two pieces".

"Well, let's do it kind of in reverse. The pieces first. Which one?" asks Mark.

"Doesn't bother me: whichever one you pick".

Mark gets out his copy of the music from the cupboard, and asks: "have you done any singing today?"

Vanessa replies, "no because I've been composing", as she fidgets with the music stand.

"Ok, well, let's do a little warming up". Mark plays a chord on the piano. "Um, some humming. Bright vowel behind the mm."

He hums the note. Vanessa copies the sound but she is sharp. Mark corrects her by playing the chord again. They hum up and down the arpeggio, a simple exercise. Mark says: "think about the breath, and tongue out". Vanessa sticks her neck and head forward when she opens her mouth to sing. She holds onto the stand and fusses with it throughout.

She sings again. The sound is awkward and tight. Mark says: "good, try and keep your head still! And now, on an aah." Vanessa nods. She sings the arpeggio on an aah, which changes colour on each note. "Good, a bit more sob". They continue to an E flat arpeggio. Vanessa's voice sounds harsh and uneven and she is unable to negotiate between her lower and middle registers. There is no vibrato in the sound.

"Good, be careful of a little bit of aspiration that appears at the end". Mark plays the top note, which is a B flat. She sings it again and he says, "Good, go for a bit more of the twang sound, now. We're missing a bit of vibrato here. Exaggerate!"

Vanessa keeps singing, and Mark smiles, "don't forget the twang!" As she continues up the scale Vanessa's voice cracks noticeably and she aspirates her top notes. She fluffs the remaining. "Vanessa, you're aspirating!" says Mark, and models a twangy falling sigh, which Vanessa imitates.

They continue up the scale in semitones. "Vanessa, keep your tongue tip up a little", instructs Mark. She attempts the note three times, and he sings in pitch on her third attempt "that's better!"

She coughs drily, and says, apologetically, "my throat can get a little scratchy". Mark murmurs, "yeah", as he begins the first phrases of the chosen song.

As they discuss the tempo, Vanessa asks, "do you know when my recital is perchance?"

Mark trumpets a sardonic laugh. "No!" He replies, with an upward inflection at the end.

"It would be good to know, wouldn't it!" jokes Mark, through gritted teeth.

"It would be handy", laughs Vanessa.

"No, unfortunately I can say that the construction of the exam timetable has not been put in my line of work. So, one would expect that it would have been out by now", says Mark.

"At least before my exam, would be nice!" Replies Vanessa. They both laugh.

The lesson continues.

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Commentary: repeating the rudiments

In this lesson excerpt, Mark and Vanessa are working on basic vocal technical exercises prior to song rehearsal. Vanessa appears to be having some difficulty in maintaining basic pitch and tempi throughout the excerpt, and her voice is heavily aspirated. She has difficulty negotiating register changes and her tone is uneven and alignment poor. She has not warmed up prior to entering the studio and seems unwilling to take responsibility for song choice or order of rehearsal. Mark asks for input from Vanessa but does not seem surprised by her lack of direction. Mark makes no comment on her lack of preparation, although he then structures the lesson to include a warm-up session. The lack of a set exam time only a few days out from the exam period is of concern to both parties.

When I saw the first lesson of the series, having eagerly awaited the video recording, my heart sank. Vanessa's voice. It was broken. My first thought, as I watched the first video was "how am I going to get through eight more hours of this?" While I could see and hear clearly what was happening, I could not at first pinpoint the problem.

At first listening, Vanessa lacked a robust vocal technique. I heard potential for an attractive warm, dark tonal colour, but Vanessa consistently sang out of pitch, had a highly aspirated tone and no consistency of tone quality across the registers, which Mark spent much time trying to resolve. Vanessa jutted her head forward to sing, had perceptible tongue root tension, and she attempted to control her sound with her jaw. Her breath management and support were poor.

There was much remedial work to be done. I wondered if Mark had already tried a number of approaches with Vanessa, and what I was seeing throughout the lesson series was the emergency work of a teacher exhausted by many attempts to develop the student's technique. Mark was patient and kind in his teaching approach with Vanessa. Throughout the lesson series, Mark put in hard work to ensure Vanessa had a blow-by-blow account of every note, every small technical requirement needed to sing the songs effectively.

Nevertheless, throughout the course of the eight lessons Vanessa showed a distinct lack of preparedness and failure to learn her repertoire. She rarely came to her lessons warmed up. Perhaps as a result, each lesson was nearly identical in approach and content. Mark would ask Vanessa what she would like to work on. She would reply with a rather vague and non-committal response. The exam exercises were attended to, followed by work on the songs. As close as two weeks before the exam Vanessa was struggling to learn the notes to one of her three recital pieces but Mark's very gentle, careful and attentive work with Vanessa showed patience and encouragement. In the final few lessons Mark worked consistently with Vanessa at the beginning of the lessons on bubble sirens and other speech pathology based exercises, which Vanessa managed to sing quite well, but as soon as she began to sing her arie, she retreated into poor habits. Watching the videos I was reminded of the Greek myth of Sisyphus, doomed by Zeus to forever roll a large rock up a steep hill, only to have it tumble back down before reaching the peak. Sisyphus was made to repeat the pointless, repetitive and ultimately futile exercise as punishment for various crimes. I wondered if these repetitive lessons felt like punishment to both Mark and Vanessa.

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A year later I am back in town for final interviews. This time I have hired a car from the airport, as it seems worth it to me to spend the cash on travelling in comfort. As it happens, the drive into town is frustratingly clogged with evening peak-hour traffic, and I have to text Vanessa to let her know I am running late.

Vanessa: this is where I'm going!

It is dark by the time I arrive at her house, a little after 5.00pm. Vanessa is waiting at the door for me, smiling, and as I walk up the path I sense a change in her demeanour. She seems, even from a shadowy distance, more settled and relaxed. I blurt out, *wow! You look great!* We greet each other like old friends, and it occurs to me that we probably shouldn't, as

while I've spent months analysing her video and interview data, she has spent no time at all with me. This is not the first time I am struck by this incongruity.

Would you like to swap teachers?

Mark has written to me via email stating he is no longer Vanessa's singing teacher. I ask Vanessa about the circumstances and she explains that he had sent her an email suggesting she swap teachers. I said, "sure!" Why not? It will be a great learning experience, it'll be really really good!"

> I'd learnt from Mark for two years, two and a half years, so I was kind of getting maybe slightly bored, as well, and wasn't learning as much as I could have, so… I think there's just so much–you hear the same thing over and over again, and sometimes it just doesn't change.

I ask her about what she is learning now and she explains it's a new way of thinking about her voice, where I'm placing it, and my resonance especially, and connection, and everything, it's all there and a million things to think of at once… feeling really good improvements at the moment, it's great.

I can wing it

Vanessa lists her repertoire. All of her pieces are in English and include three folk songs by Britten. Her favourite genre Musical Theatre is also in abundance, with songs by Schonberg and Boublil, Weill, Schwartz and Sondheim in her recital program. I wonder if the classical repertoire of the previous year, selected by Mark, played a part in her lacklustre approach to learning? Vanessa observes,

> I'm finding I'm getting my repertoire down pretty well pat, and pretty down. I think it's… understanding it more, maybe [it's] slightly simpler, or I'm just understanding, or feeling the music a little bit more? Like I feel the story of the music, and I can hear where it's going a lot easier, and just go, you know "I can wing it a little bit", and go all right.

Vanessa's ease of learning her repertoire suggests that the previous year's repertoire was too difficult musically for her to comprehend or appreciate, but I sense she is still not really engaging with the learning process. Her statement about winging it sounds like someone who doesn't work hard at her craft.

A different perspective

Together we watch some of the video excerpts selected for analysis and Vanessa explains what she perceives are some of the greatest differences in her lessons this year between Mark and her new teacher's approach.

> I think it's just the focus on what to change, instead of–um, Mark was very focussed on my tongue root tension, which I get with my new teacher as well, but he's [her new teacher] also extremely focussed on connection between my stomach muscles and how I'm singing.

Vanessa claims her new teacher has included more exercises and technical work than Mark, which she feels is interesting.

> I notice with my new teacher he gives me a lot of warm ups… he's got me doing a lot of my warm ups from my higher part of the register going down instead of going up, to try and build up my higher voice, as well. Which is really, really fascinating, and going "wow!" and so merging the two voices a lot more, as well.

Vanessa's open dialogue about her singing lessons is in stark contrast to her demeanour in the first interview. We watch a scene of her penultimate lesson, noting her faulty alignment in the excerpt. This is something I've been noticing a lot more, lately, is how I actually… yeah, the neck thing, and pulling forward! Vanessa appears to be more aware of her technical flaws in alignment and jaw tension.

Singing through straws

In another excerpt Vanessa sings an ascending scale on an 'aah' vowel. Her tone flips awkwardly from an uncomfortable low register tone to a breathy one about halfway up the scale. She explains, I'm allowing my larynx to flip. And so therefore it's changing the tone and the sound of it. The way she is resolving it is to do a particular exercise devised by Ingo Titze. It's actually a lot of actually singing tongue out and first singing tongue in and then sticking it out as well, and, yeah, a lot of humming, and singing through straws. Titze recommends it as a way of controlling airflow, support, tonal placement and vocal tiredness (www.ncvs.org, uploaded to YouTube by jmostrem, 2009). She grabs a straw to show me the exercise.

> I can't really use my jaw to control my tone, or where my notes are going, so I have to use the connection on, like from down here [Vanessa holds her lower torso] instead of from up here [she points to her head and neck] which is really releasing it a lot, and it's very fascinating. I can tell now, I can also hear it, when I'm doing it, more than I could

last year, and I can go, "oh, ok, that's what's happening, I can do this to stop it", and focus on solutions instead of the problem a little bit more!

There is minor audible improvement in Vanessa's vocal tone and quality when she sings me a brief scale. It seems to me that with her new teacher has come a different pedagogy, with positive results on Vanessa's vocal technique, improved self-diagnosis, and a boost in her self-confidence. The comment about focussing on the solution rather than the problem is curious and I wonder how much of her poor self-confidence has been due to this misplaced focus and whether Mark's self-directed teaching approach was the best one for her.

Breaking old habits is never easy

We look at another section of video. She explains about the poor vibrato in the excerpt. I think it's the way I was singing, because of how it–yeah, I couldn't quite deal with the twang and the vibrato at the same time. Vanessa explains the technique she is using to address this fault. I sometimes lose it–and sometimes still have to be reminded, but it's getting there, it's getting there. Breaking old habits is never easy.

I ask Vanessa a similar question from a year prior, wondering if she had these habits prior to entering Uni. She replies, not sure… I never quite remembered having those issues. And I remember I went back to my old singing teacher just for a coffee and a catch up, and stuff like that, and she goes: "you're singing higher than you used to".

Higher than I'd ever sung in my life

According to Vanessa, this is because she used to train me as a contralto! Now, her new teacher is consolidating her registers. I think maybe that was also a shock to the system that I was doing all this higher stuff when nearly my entire life I was doing lower stuff. Vanessa claims this was disconcerting.

I wasn't overly happy about it. I was going, "why are you– I've never sung this before!" I remember the first song I got given–it was higher than I'd ever sung in my life. It went up to a high G and I'm like: "I've never sung a high G in a song before!" and then to know that it was actually there was fun, but–yeah.

I wonder if Mark specifically selected repertoire to challenge Vanessa's opinion of her voice, or whether he felt that she ought to be able to reach the high notes in the contralto range without too much difficulty, despite her unfamiliarity with high pitches.

A lostness in my voice

In the months before she changed teachers, Vanessa had serious doubts about her ability to sing, but couldn't articulate the problem. She says of her final semester with Mark,

> I think I was a very … slightly negative, at one point. Of all this: "why am I doing this?" sort of thing, but I think it's more of almost frustration, of "I've been doing all this stuff but how is it not changing what's going on?" and "I know it's there but it's not there": a lostness in my voice, sort of. I didn't fully understand it, and I think I still don't fully understand it, but I'm getting to know it a little bit more, and getting to know what I'm capable of. At the time I don't think I fully understood it myself, or that I had these thoughts. I don't know, maybe not even the confidence to acknowledge that I had this issue, sort of thing, it was more of a "oh, ok, maybe is there something wrong with me"…

> I was very much aware of time, when I was in the lesson with Mark, and sometimes, I felt that maybe I was just in there maybe not to be really taught anything, in a sense? Do you understand that? I was just there, something to go through, and then, to the next. I think my lessons with Mark ended up being repetitive, I think that's why it didn't improve as much, it just got repetitive.

The lessons became hard going for both Vanessa and Mark, with the awareness of the passing of time a reflection of how difficult it must have been to maintain interest when there was no audible vocal progress.

Why aren't you helping me here?

The lack of change in Vanessa's poor vocal technique resulted in loss of feelings of competence, and loss of confidence. The consequence of this can be loss of motivation to practice, with a poor practice regime compounding the problem and adding to a cycle of failure.

> I was getting frustrated with myself at not changing. I was then getting frustrated with Mark, going "why aren't you helping me here?"… Then stress added upon that, it just kind of put a LOT of self-doubt in my singing, and by the end of last year, I wasn't in the best place, it hadn't been a very good semester, in general.

Now, she claims, with a new teacher, I know I'm changing for the better at this point. It reminded me a lot of when I first started with Mark. New teacher, different things to teach me, which is good. It's good to reach that. It seems then that lessons with Mark were beneficial at first, even as the pedagogical relationship eroded over time.

Complete panic, complete stress

I take the opportunity to ask about what had made Vanessa repeat a semester's study and she explains that her recital time had changed unexpectedly, causing her to fail her performance exam.

> I had half an hour before the time they told me, before my recital, half an hour; I was ready, I was going to do my final prep, a final warm-up, and then the next thing I know someone comes up to me and goes "you're supposed to be on stage NOW". They had a different timetable on the back to what they'd given us students! So, from complete panic, complete stress, everything; going into recital–that just didn't work at all.

She claims she tried to complain to the lecturers about the misinformation, but that her word was not taken. It was like–they were going to take the word of lecturers instead of the word of me, sort of thing, above my word, because they're lecturers and I'm just a student, trying to explain why I failed, sort of thing.

While I feel sympathetic towards Vanessa for her tale of university chaos, I am aware of many instances of this type of event occurring without undue impact on the performance of the student. It appears that an altered timetable contributed to a failing grade while Vanessa was already under stress from performance nerves and lack of preparation. Nevertheless, Vanessa's perception of lack of respect and neglect by the institution makes me uneasy. Vanessa has moved on now, though, and will complete her three-year degree at the end of the year.

I'll practise tomorrow

Her busy life, working two jobs and attending uni means study is frequently set aside. Vanessa explains it doesn't give [me] a lot of free time…Some of my practise time tends to go a little out of the way, I go "I'll just practise, I'll just practise", and then the day is gone, and I'm like "I'll practise tomorrow, oh wait, it's my next lesson, where did that go!"

Vanessa still doesn't seem to prioritise her practice sessions and I sense a student who has not fully engaged with the dispositions and attributes required for a successful music career. Nevertheless, she exudes greater confidence than at the last interview and agrees, I have grown up a bit. A lot of changes, but a lot more confidence in myself, and knowing that, yeah, I can take on any hurdle that comes against me, so, that attitude has finally hit, and [me] saying, "you know what? I can do anything!

I'm not stuck on one idea

We talk about Vanessa's post-study options in music therapy, music teaching and international musical theatre courses. A career in opera is tellingly omitted. While she is singing at the weddings of friends, Vanessa admits her career plans for after her degree are still not at all fixed. They change weekly. Every time I see something new I'm like "oh yeah, I could do that!" I'm not stuck on one idea, which I think is … what I'm happy about…I can go– "you know what? I can change it like this! And this is where I'm going!"

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Mark: letting go

Mark's final interview takes place a few hours later, after dinner with his wife. We have become good friends during the course of the study and I enjoy his company and rather acerbic view on life. We settle into comfortable chairs and Mark tells his account of the last semester.

She'd tried once and didn't get in

Vanessa did not achieve successful entry on her first audition. Mark explains: Vanessa was a mid-year entry, I remember being on her panel, the second time. She'd tried once and she didn't get in, and then, for some reason, she was let in. He looks at me, pointedly. I ask Mark why he then recommended Vanessa as the student for the study, and he comments: she is someone I would describe as fairly stable, on the surface of what I know about these students, which is next to nothing, because I don't ask… But she's pretty steady and she seems on the surface to be fairly keen. But, that doesn't then go forward.

He explains through the process of an external review, there's been a massive refocus of the undergraduate program. And that has had quite far reaching impact. According to Mark, the offerings at the institution have broadened to include contemporary music, and this impacts on his studio numbers. As a result the classical program has reduced from thirty classical students to about eight, and contemporary vocalists now make up the bulk of the singers. His practice has halved.

Vanessa, accepted at the time of this change in policy, seems to be falling in the crack between the contemporary and classical singers with her love of musical theatre. The singing teachers at this institution are classically trained and their emphasis on classical music has

perhaps not been to her musical taste. This may partially account for her lack of drive. Mark explains another problem he perceives with the undergraduate program for classical singers: what they're getting has basically been stripped down, and stripped away to the barest of bare kind of training. He looks at me, incredulous as he describes how the meagre study options for classical singers at the institution have been further whittled away over the course of the last few years, including the loss of history and language subjects.

Mark seems gloomy about this and his own prospects at the institution, declaring, I cannot stay as a casual in tertiary education because there's just no future in that whatsoever. There's no career path, I cannot be paid for half the year, there's no sense of worth, I don't feel part of anything, you know, but also, it's the institution itself. They place no–seemingly–no value on what I do. The lack of respect for his craft extends, he feels, throughout the faculty, and has affected the administration too. To me this illuminates Vanessa's somewhat ambiguous attitude toward the institution.

Nobody knows what is going on

I tell Mark about Vanessa's rationale she had proffered for her failing exam performance. He states logically, the students have a responsibility to inform themselves of when their time is, and the times change all the time… I respond, *is that normal though? Is that acceptable practice?* No, no no, not at all. A final timetable should be a final exam timetable. He explains,

> But you know, you're faced with an institution that has gone through a massive restructure because of financial difficulty; many admin staff with twenty-five years experience, left. In one go. In one fell swoop they all took redundancies when I first started… Ever since then the admin staff have been a revolving door. So nobody knows what is going on, there is no knowledge retention, there's no knowledge of systems, it's all hope for the best.

This, he suggests, explains the poor administration of the university in failing to provide a fixed exam time for Vanessa. Nevertheless Mark feels that Vanessa's view of events is rather simplistic, commenting instead that her poor preparation and lack of responsibility taken for her learning was to blame for her failure.

Very flustered

> So what she's actually saying is she got very flustered. Well, ok, we all get flustered, but when there's absolutely nothing to fall back on, even if you're calm you're in trouble, and if you're flustered, if you don't know the music very well, and you've got significant

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technical problems that are just amplified beyond belief when you're nervous, then there's only going to be one result.

Mark found that her not only did her technical problems amplify when she got nervous, but, more importantly, she was underprepared for the exam. She would frequently come to performance classes unprepared.

On the rare occasion when I would hear her sing just in front of the other singers, you know she wouldn't know the music. Well, can you use motivation of "egg on your face" to learn something? That didn't seem to make any difference, you know? You have to get up and sing something, so you might actually be really motivated to learn it so you don't look silly, but no, it didn't seem to make a lot of difference. I was constantly trying to find ways of making it easier. But it really didn't.

I speculate that perhaps she lacked intrinsic motivation, which might spark a poor response to practice. Mark agrees, sympathetic to a young person's plight. I suspect she's in the situation that she really doesn't know what she wants to do, and I certainly don't blame her for that, and she's certainly not alone. At that point in a person's life a lot of people don't know what they want to do. This lack of direction, he claims, is crucial to Vanessa's lack of motivation and may partly account for her low self-confidence in singing.

What do I concentrate on today?

Mark struggled from the beginning to help Vanessa, explaining,

Vanessa has the two things: incredible technical issues, and a basic deficiency in musicianship. And those two things combined, are very challenging to deal with. Because it's a constant battle of "well, what do I concentrate on today?" Do I concentrate on getting five bars of music right, or do I try and do something about this incredible tongue root tension and lack of support in the body?

Mark talks about other students with similar problems to Vanessa, and while he acknowledges that although they might have improved slightly over time, he declares more often than not it's a case of, can we get this person across the line, you know, can we actually just get them through a forty minute recital? God forbid! And pray that the panel is in a jovial mood. Mostly it was more that.

For Mark, his approach for some of his students appears to be what might be called "emergency teaching". Constricted by the student's lack of technical facility or home practice and by the demands of the course, he is at times unable to give the students more than a

rudimentary, basic pedagogy based on fundamental musicianship, designed to help them to pass the course requirements. He reminds me however, these people are adults, I'm not forcing them to do anything, I'm putting this information on the table, all students, all singers, have to learn to apply it, pick it up, play with it, if it doesn't work leave it behind.

He is extremely frustrated by his students' lack of responsibility in their learning, and admits he would like to be able to send them away if they have not learnt their material, but he has been told he is not to do that, so he tries to find other ways around the problem. Mark had sent me an email mid-semester outlining his approach in singing lessons and amongst other comments had listed his preferred pedagogical and physiology texts, which include recent works by Sundberg, Sataloff, Chapman and other experts. From his comments it seems evident that he employs a range of pedagogical strategies in his lessons based on deep knowledge of physiology, and he writes of the learning and teaching relationship that

> I would hope that the student realizes I am not interested in criticizing for the sake of criticism, but rather I'm looking to focus on very specific issues that I hear and see in each lesson. I hope that I can empower the student to allow mistakes to occur. Making mistakes (and analysing them) are crucial in the learning process for singers. The relationship must also be one in which the student feels that she can trust me–I hope that is the case. Without trust, constriction and reluctance to have a go at something in a different or new way become the norm–all counter-productive to moving technique forward.

Ninety-nine percent of the work needed to be done NOT in that room

I mention that Vanessa had talked about being yelled at, and Mark is shocked. He responds, in twenty-odd years of teaching singing I've never yelled at a student–it would be terrible for my vocal folds and larynx for a start–and certainly not at Vanessa. We wonder what that comment might actually mean, and I suggest Vanessa's extremely low self-confidence is to blame.

As we look at some of the videoed lesson excerpts from the seventh lesson, Mark talks about some of his teaching approaches for Vanessa, based partly on the Estill approach. Of Estill he says in regards to laryngeal movement:

> It's very good–the low larynx sob and the approximation of the vocal folds with the twang, you know, that's pretty crucial for somebody like Vanessa, because so often she's operated in falsetto. But you know, it's interesting hearing that back, because I was faced with, whoa, when you get bombarded with problems, how do you say, "ok, I'll try that one"? 'Cause there's so many things. There's also in that sound, so much

speech mode there, as well, but it's inconsistent per note, you know? Clearly her thyroid cartilage is in neutral most of the time–it's not tilted. Yeah, you would expect after a certain amount of time that would change, but nup.

I point out some issues Vanessa had with vibrato and breath management. Mark agrees.

When you're not using your body, and when your vocal folds are operating in falsetto, you don't have any hope really, once you start pushing the air through, she's just going to run out of breath, and that's constantly what would happen. You know? That was something right from the beginning that she couldn't sing more than a bar and a half, you know?

Mark describes some other teaching approaches he used to assist Vanessa's learning, including playing the melody onto a recording and reciting any foreign language text very slowly in rhythm. He sighs. I couldn't seem to impress upon her the need to have some kind of structured practice. And that most–ninety-nine percent–of the work needed to be done *not* in that room.

In Mark's experience Vanessa is not an isolated example of poor self-direction and lack of preparedness. Mark sees the problem of lack of responsibility, poor preparation and poor musicianship by many of his students as contributing to poor quality lessons where vocal technical development is not always possible. It was Mark's decision to drop Vanessa from his teaching roster; in part due to a lack of time because of his need to complete his doctoral studies, but also because he perceives he had failed to help her. I felt like, well, it would be in her best interest to go to someone else, because I think I've done everything I can.

Three years with one teacher is more than enough

Mark was unaware that Vanessa had never sung as high as a G when she began with him but he comments, that doesn't really surprise me. But that's interesting because, it shows that when you take things out of a difficult context, when you take the notes on the page away and you [the singer] don't really know what pitch you're at, then things are much easier.

Mark perceives that Vanessa's technical and musicianship deficiencies were so profound that it caused an incredible lack of confidence… it must be awful to have that experience of looking at the printed page and thinking "oh this is so difficult" and that everything that's on the page is so difficult, it doesn't matter what it is. Mark's acknowledgement of Vanessa's lack of confidence shows that he, too, was fully aware of this hindrance to her progress. He claims he tried every strategy he could think of to assist her to improve, without success. Even had she progressed, he admits,

I still would have said to her, "I still think it's in your best interests to go to someone else", because I don't care who it is, if it's Pavarotti or anyone, I think that a couple of years, certainly with kids of this age, three years with one teacher is more than enough, and then it's time for them to broaden their horizons and seek out somebody else.

Mark's concern for this non-achieving student is evident. He feels he made the right decision to move her on. I do think that you've got to think about the long-term interests of the student, and where they're going and what they might want to do. Primarily so you can direct them in the most responsible kind of way.

It makes everyone's life a misery

I ask if Mark ever portrayed the same carelessness as his current students, but he assures me he took responsibility for his learning, saying, I would have been embarrassed to be making those kinds of mistakes. I wonder then if the poor motivation and work practices Mark feels is endemic in some of his current students is a regional, generational or personal characteristic, but Mark feels the students are a product of a poor musical education prior to their admittance at the institution.

I do think that it does point to the significant issues in the school music education system… I do suspect it's a combination of a number of things rather than "oh, well, it's a small town so there's no competition", I don't think it's that, I think it's more to do with the general kind of music standard of the students themselves.

Mark talks of the students at the institution in rather bleak terms. I recall his comments about his own performance as a country-raised secondary student, then undergraduate. He lacked focus; he didn't care particularly for some aspects of his uni course, and that it was not until he went back to uni to upgrade his degree that he found the enthusiasm and commitment that have characterised his work habits ever since. Has he forgotten his own youthful attitude and perceived standard of musicianship?

He points out he attained an undergraduate place solely on the strength of his singing audition, not his musicianship or secondary school grades. He perceives the poor standard of singing students at his current institution is a result of changing priorities and an overarching financial imperative to meet the costs of running such a place. This, he feels, is causing havoc for the staff, because many of the students admitted lack both the talent and drive required to become professional musicians.

What is going on with the standard of entry, the cut off point? Because it's often been said, "well, if you don't have a certain number of students then you'll be out of a job": that one gets peddled to the full time staff, and so as a result of that you have a lot of people… who shouldn't be there. And so it basically makes everyone's life a misery.

I need students to make my life tick

The failure of Vanessa to be self-directing and progress technically was one of the prime reasons for the change of teacher. To Mark, a positive learning and teaching relationship between student and teacher is not always predicated on the initial ability of the student, rather, on the work ethic of the student and their self-efficacy. There are students you connect with and there are students that you don't. And it often has nothing to do with their basic ability. Some of the students who are really fantastic you would quite happily never see again, and vice versa. Despite his evident distress in failing to help Vanessa, however, Mark has his performance career to sustain him and students are a necessary and satisfying addition to a hard-fought and won music career.

I just accept the students I'm allocated. They come and they go, you know? And I'm very happy to work with them for the time they're enrolled, and then if they want to go another teacher then that's fine, I don't hold onto these things at all. Because it's not the be-all-and-end-all for me. I know if the student walks out the door I can pick up my own music and start working on that, you know? [He chuckles.] But I need students to make my life tick, and to balance the performing and researching aspects of my career. At the same time I can usually find something that the student can lock onto, and that can be a little something that helps them and they're able to go forward with that thing.

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At the close of the study Mark has found a way forward. He was awarded his doctorate and recently attained a full-time lectureship at another university out of the region while continuing to perform. He is much happier at his new institution, feeling that there is much greater respect for his craft and classical music generally. We regularly stay in contact.

Of Vanessa, I have been unable to contact her as her contact details have changed, although an online search indicated she had successfully obtained her undergraduate degree. I suspect her compound issues of poor musicianship, low self-confidence, and lack of motivation and uncertain life goals are so profound that she will be unable to build a career in music performance. I hope she proves me wrong.

As I consider this case-study and the difficulties both Mark and Vanessa faced in their time at the institution and within the timeframe of the study, I am reminded of what

Clandinin states about these narratives, "how many stories of music are silenced or kept secret as the dominant narrative shapes the landscape?" (2010, p. 202). The dyad of Mark and Vanessa provides a fascinating contrast in a study that might otherwise have been a celebration of elite training with elite, talented students. The failure of this pedagogical relationship suggests that beneath the surface of some Australian tertiary music institutions there lies an inevitable everyday reality made worse by poor levels of Australian federal funding for higher education institutions, particularly in regional areas. Financially impoverished music institutions may be forced to accept unsuitable students in order to sustain undergraduate numbers, programs and academic staff; as a result of changes to institutional policy and course requirements teachers may feel their expertise and commitment are not respected or valued. Students may be a low standard across a range of core skills and lack self-efficacy and motivation; and teachers, despite considerable expertise, commitment, care and experience, may fail to find a pedagogical pathway to help these students progress.

Notes on the narrative.

Chapter Seven provides a discussion on the findings of the narrative account above and links them to the theoretical framework outlined in the literature review.

Chapter Six. Little courageous decisions

Clarice: the artist

Clarice has agreed to meet me at her workplace, the first interview squeezed in between lessons and lectures, early first semester, 2010. Clarice is a senior singing teacher at her institution, and runs a number of courses in singing pedagogy and physiology. We are sitting in her office, which doubles as a teaching space. She sits behind her desk, I on the other side. Her studio is entered via a long, carpeted, dimly lit corridor. It is a square room with a small, square window on the far wall. There is another, larger window in the room overlooking the internal corridor and the room is well ordered and tidy. A black grand piano inhabits one corner, music piled in three neat stacks on its surface. There are two full bookshelves and a desk by the corridor window, full of books and music scores. The floor is austere linoleum, but there are cheerful pictures on the walls, which create an attractive contrast.

The world of the arts was always going to be my world

I ask Clarice about her childhood. She had a rural upbringing with her musician mother and farmer father, and music was a normal but central activity in her life. Given her childhood experiences and her love for music, Clarice felt that her studying music at tertiary level was inevitable. She smiles as she recounts,

> It was clear from an early age where my passion was and where my deepest emotional experiences were. I think I was six when I decided that I belonged in the city and that I really wasn't a country girl. Music was certainly part of that. I remember at about six, too, seeing Nureyev and Fonteyn in a movie and just totally falling in love with that world, so I think that the world of the arts was always going to be my world.

Clarice's early parental encouragement and access to artistic experiences made her career in the arts a feasible option. Having learnt piano to a high standard, she instead opted for singing as her principal instrument.

A language that meant nothing to me

Clarice completed a university-based music degree within an arts faculty. Her tertiary singing lessons were not constructive learning experiences. She seems openly annoyed by this, claiming they weren't really singing lessons. He was a coach, a European gentleman, quite elderly. He just gave me a few Italian songs and arias and I used to sight-read them every week. I never did any practice, I didn't know what to practice!

She raises her hands in frustration–as an advanced sight-reader, she had no difficulty learning the songs but her vocal techniques weren't being developed. Clarice didn't understand the rudiments of vocal technique, nor were they explained to her. She recalls,

> The people here just spoke a language that meant nothing to me, even though they were intelligent and experienced. My first teacher the choirmaster was a highly intelligent man, but nobody said anything that I could…really understand! And as in, grab hold of. Ok you might get a result in a lesson, but the point of getting a result in a lesson is so that you can reproduce it at home and you have to have a means of doing that, and for me, that just didn't work.

Clarice's desire to share a common language for correct vocal technique to be replicated away from the lesson was not provided and she believes her singing technique suffered as a result. I comment: *it seems to me that singers who were learning in the seventies and eighties really struggled to find teachers who actually had any knowledge of physiology whatsoever.* Clarice agrees, stating emphatically,

> Did not, did not, and scorned it. Many teachers at the time scorned such an approach. I didn't know that I had an interest in physiology, nor was I reading, and that's my own stupid fault, I did no reading at this time! I always felt so strong as a musician, and not strong technically. I just felt that what came out my mouth every day was a total surprise, you know?

Clarice's frank acknowledgement of her refusal to learn about vocal physiology is at odds with her current approach to singing pedagogy, based on years of formal study and ongoing professional development. Her poor engagement of it during this time seems due to the lack of obvious relevance to her art, compounded by a dismissive and even disrespectful attitude about singing technique by her teachers.

I'm not a forelock tugging person

She believes they simply had a different view of what was possible then, and taught according to tradition and what they had learned. Her approach is different.

> I make sure that I model an informed practice to my students. I hope it helps them to respect the process of teaching and learning. My models, with few exceptions, didn't show this. One was still expected to 'take on' all that went on in the studio. I model. It's not daggy. Nearly everybody, except for one teacher, modelled "daggy" to me. Daggy, and disinterest, and actual disrespect for that process. And then, frankly, I looked at the

forelock tugging side of things, which I am SO not, and at that stage I didn't know the hows or the whys, but I'm not a forelock tugging person, and so I didn't go to it fully there either because I saw that there were people who did tug their forelock to that process, and I just wasn't going to be part of that. It was me being stubborn. I was a stubborn little person!

I jokingly ask, *has anything changed?* Clarice chuckles wryly. Probably not! She smiles. Clarice intuitively sensed there were potential problems in following just one teacher, method or approach. And her forthright personality did not fit the disciple mould.

I think that the relationship between myself and my singing teachers of the time was one of mutual incomprehension, and that they could have elicited so much more from me, had they been much more perceptive about who I was, rather than expecting me to be some other sort of template of singer-learner.

Despite less than ideal singing training, Clarice successfully worked as a full-time professional singer for a number of years on the concert platform, punctuated by other work at times. Clarice perceives the result of being taught singing by people who did not engage with knowledge about teaching then informed her own approach to teaching singing and shaped her next decision. Realising she needed to move out of her comfort zone and develop her knowledge about singing and teaching, Clarice decided to study singing overseas as part of a higher degree, looking for a bigger world and a different approach.

I wanted to be in a conservatory, specifically, because I'd been through the university system in Australia, and I wanted to observe and listen to singers and performance teaching in another system, because I was specifically training to be a singing teacher at that stage.

Clarice perceived there was a difference between a conservatoire and a music faculty attached to a university–where her own training had taken place. She also perceived the value in teaching, choosing this as her future career path. More importantly, she rejected the limited, imitative master apprentice approach that had shaped her own vocal education, opting instead for a more comprehensive approach to vocal development. This included learning about voice science and physiology alongside observation and her own vocal experimentation.

A revelation

While overseas, Clarice struggled to find a teacher who could give her the technical guidance and discussion she needed. Eventually she found her final teacher, a really bright

and very informed man. Meeting twice a week they worked only on technical issues. At the same time, I was attending many, many opera performances with the world's major singers, and learning to listen critically. Both of these were so important to my own learning. She acknowledges, however, that it was the reading for her postgraduate study that was of the greatest benefit in improving her understanding of the vocal mechanism. She recalls,

> It became a revelation. And I think more than anything it was reading voice science that that helped. And it was the visual side of things, it was being able to actually visualise what was going on in there, and getting a pretty broad view of what was verifiable which was so important. Within six months I realised there was plenty of disagreement in the voice science literature, and indeed the term "voice science" is a bit of a joke, but I could see the initial thing was: Cornelius Reid says this, and Miller says this, and a few other people say this, and they're clearly not agreeing with each other. So what the hell do I do, as a teacher, since I'm not a joiner, how am I going to mediate this situation? So I just read and read and read and read, and finally it started to dawn on me; the physiology started to make sense, and I thought: "ok"!

The study and observation provided Clarice with a visual template of the human body and gave her pedagogical clues as to how to approach vocal physiology. It also impacted on her approach to learning singing and her attitude to herself. Clarice's singing crisis had been in part a failure of her previous teachers to identify her vocal problems and being taught in a way that hindered her vocal development. Her final teacher helped her release tension and reverse the negative self-talk that had held back her development. She smiles as she tells the story of this transformation.

> I remember a horrible period of some months with my new, and final teacher there, trying to negotiate the lower passaggio, and going [here she demonstrates a major descending arpeggio from D 5 with an obvious registration glitch at about F#4 into speech register] and thinking, "oh my god, that feels like I'm going to throw up!" Which it is what happens–it just seizes up at the diaphragm level and the throat seizes up, and I realised also through reading that's a sort of a primary function taking over. As Thurmann and Welch say, all of these things have primary functions according to life and survival, and all of these singing functions are superimposed on top of those things, but I realised that also had a pretty strong emotional punch, because it felt bad, and I thought "well ok, I'm going to have to see myself through this". I thought, "every time I'm doing my practice and I start to feel like that I'm going to stop immediately."

I learned how to speak nicely to myself

And I did, and I learned how to speak nicely to myself as a singer for the first time in my life. I really stopped and calmed myself down. Stopped the spiral of panic that people go into, saying "oh my god that doesn't work", or that "oh my god that feels terrible". And stopped saying, "you stupid girl" you know, "you can't do this" and started parenting myself, saying "it's ok, you'll be alright, you're doing well. Just be calm, and just try it again. Calmly." I teach that way, to this day, and I talk to my students about how to speak to themselves. And I know that probably only a small percentage of them hear that, but some of them do, some of them certainly do.

Clarice speaks of two researchers in singing: Thurmann and Welch, and their book Bodymind and Voice (2000) in whose work many of the psychological functions about singing that affect the physiological are explained. Clarice shows her deep understanding of the field–and by quoting them I sense she expects me to know about them, too. I sense her desire to foment understanding in her students, and, momentarily, I have also become her student. For her own journey, however, Clarice was negotiating a gentler learning approach. She gave herself permission to fail and as a consequence her singing markedly improved.

I wanted to work with people who were serious

Sometime after her return to Australia she applied to teach at her local conservatorium and was given a few preparatory students to teach on a casual basis. As they began to show success in singing auditions, she was employed to teach undergraduate students and from there her practice blossomed. As she explained, her international higher degree studies were all directed towards Conservatory teaching. Her wry acknowledgment of the many competing claims within voice science also informed her singular approach to singing teaching. Her performance and language training, reading the scientific and pedagogic literature combined with critical listening to excellent international-level singing were motivated by her desire to teach singers planning a career.

That was why I took that path, and I wanted to work with people who were serious, because I really knew that it was not going to be truthful for me, to work with people who were not serious in the end. And that gets back to the fact that I wanted to be working at a level of musical sophistication that fed into who I always was, which felt truthful and to which I was completely committed.

Every bit of blood

Clarice's teaching practice has evolved now from teaching undergraduates to teaching opera singers, including professionals. This, she feels, supports her desire to work at

that musically sophisticated level she believes nurtures her artistry. She claims the greatest joy of my work is to work with professionals where I have to actually take myself through entire roles with them. Clarice's superior piano skills have held her in good stead for this evolution of her teaching practice. More significantly, Clarice sees her role as teacher as one who can help her singing students reach their goals. She says, passionately, when I ask her of the importance she places on one-to-one lessons: without question it is enablement. I will not allow someone to come into my room, and not give them every bit of blood I can, to get them where THEY tell me they want to be.

While Clarice acknowledges her responsibility to the student, she also speaks of the student's duty to be clear in their desire and goals. She also acknowledges the intensity of classical singing training, particularly at the elite level, commenting briskly that it just simply isn't possible to do this kind of intensive training, without one-to-one feedback. And I do think that–my kids don't go away for four months of the year, and not have lessons. Singers who have career aspirations need to work year-round, and not just during Conservatory semesters.

It is my job to create that atmosphere

Given her own early learning experiences and the attitudes of her early singing teachers, Clarice feels a responsibility to the students who enter her studio to provide a safe place where good learning will take place.

> I see it very much as my responsibility now to find a way of allowing the talented person who walks in my door, to be in that world and feel comfortable, and to feel accepted. And to feel valued, while they are in the process of learning, because otherwise, frankly, I don't think they will learn. It is my job to create that atmosphere and it is my job to spend quite an amount of mental and emotional "feeler" kind of energy, on making sure that they are, on the whole, within a comfort zone. Because otherwise they will not learn. Once those neurotransmitters get blocked with stress and lack of self-belief, from either me or the singer; they won't learn, and I wouldn't be able to live with that comfortably.

The personal, intense, nurturing approach espoused by Clarice is not unusual in this industry and seems to mirror many of the caring professions where strong relatedness between client and professional is imperative for the development of the client's well-being.

Zig zags in the path

Clarice perceives her role to be more than teacher: she is a mentor for her students. She feels her role includes finding a pathway for her students to follow in their quest to perform,

and that she is one of the conduits for professional networks. Again, she sees this as part of her role as enabling the student with ability and drive to reach their goal.

> I have a responsibility to let them know what is possible, and let them know what is possible for them now, and next year, and the year after that, so that they see a path and some of the possible zig zags in the path.

> I think an enormous part of my mentoring is separate from but related to the actual technical musical work because of the trust that builds up with a singing teacher. It puts a singing teacher in a situation of being, in many ways, a really good agent, before they [students] are able to even remotely think about having an agent. So, you know, my musical contacts get them work, I let them know about competitions, and I discuss with them and all that sort of thing, I warm them up, before competitions if I can, and it's all about enablement.

Clarice indicates that her approach is about developing the whole performer and that the singing teacher is vital for this development. She explains, a singing teacher's knowledge of what a singer can do at any point allows them to enable connections with other musicians, competitions and performing opportunities in Australia and elsewhere. These discussions are part of a singer's growing awareness of their professional world. More than developing mere domain skills, she is also inculcating students into a professional singing life. However Clarice tempers this assertion with a warning that the fundamental basis of a good professional life is the technical vocal facility to maintain such a career, because there's no point if they don't have the technical chops to do it with. Their technique is the basis for ongoing musical and performing development.

The designated dag

Clarice perceives the crucial need for a singing teacher to have been a performer at some stage. She feels this gives the singing teacher's work credibility and substance, despite her perception that young singers who are completely focussed on performance tend to reject the idea of teaching as something like a necessary evil. It is in her next droll comment I sense the passion and value she feels for the craft of teaching regardless of opinion.

> It certainly feeds in an experience which can be incredibly valuable, to enable continuing empathy with the process of singing and preparing audiences. Student singers need to feel on the whole that you have some sort of credibility as a performer, I think, because they are in the midst of going through that "oh my god this singing teacher is–I know they're necessary, but, it's such a daggy* thing to do!" They're going through that and they might well come out the other end of it too, but right now they

want to be performers, no matter what their talent is, or what they perceive their talent is, God bless them! And that's fine–I accept that quite happily. I'm quite prepared to be the designated dag for a few years!

* Dag is an affectionate Australian slang term for a person who is unfashionable and uncool but affable.

To conclude the interview I ask Clarice to tell me a little about the student I will be observing in the study. She smiles as she explains Phoebe was very young when she started but she felt Phoebe was worth it because every singer deserves to be met where they are, so we made the journey to move ahead together.

I felt it was a really calculated risk, and it still remains a risk, that she IS so bright, and IS very young, and the voice IS so developed already, that somebody outside the institution said "oh my goodness, God looked down and said "oh there's somebody" and tipped a whole lot of mezzo talent at that person!" and that's who she is, and she's a wonderful girl as well.

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Phoebe: the performer

A mezzo-soprano, Phoebe is in second year at the Conservatorium but has been learning singing with Clarice for two and a half years. We are in the same office an hour later, sitting opposite each other in plastic chairs. Phoebe is eloquent, quick to respond to questions, and laughs easily. She talks with rapid-fire delivery about her life and ambitions.

I was really drawn to it

Phoebe's secondary school music teacher introduced her to singing. She recalls, I was really drawn to it, I also liked, you know, dancing and performing and all that kind of stuff, I wasn't really into sport… Phoebe's non-musical parents were very supportive of her initial training and provided plenty of encouragement. Phoebe talks about the enjoyment of her singing lessons prior to learning with Clarice, commenting,

I'd always liked music and performing but I'd never really found the thing that really interested me, and I think it was because singing seems to be a combination of intellectual processes, physical processes and musical processes. Which I guess

involves emotional, expressive kinds of things so I think it interested me from the outset because of that.

Phoebe's first singing teacher was kind, gentle and fun as well as warm and encouraging, and they shared a great connection. It was a positive experience. She feels that the first relationship with a teacher is a really important one, and it needs to foster a child's learning and enthusiasm for what they're doing. Then, in year 12, during two years spent at a performing arts high school, Phoebe began singing lessons with Clarice at the Conservatorium.

I was petrified

Phoebe laughs and confesses of the very first lesson:

> I was petrified! … It kind of kicked me up the bum a little bit, not that I needed it – I was practising really hard before that, but I suddenly thought I've got something to prove, because I'd had such a good relationship with my old teacher, and I mean I have that with Clarice you know, tenfold, but I think it was a moment of realisation, that I knew I'd have to step up now, and you have something to prove.

> It was very different coming to a teacher that I had yet to build a relationship with and had yet to show her what I could do, or, what I might be able to do in the future. And, let her make that assessment for herself.

Phoebe points out the uncertainty of the new relationship, indicating that learning singing is dependent on what develops between teacher and student.

Singing is such an exposed art

Over the last two years, Phoebe feels Clarice and she have developed good communication and rapport.

> I think we get along well in terms of our personality as much as working together and I think that's really important, because I think singing is such an exposed art, it's such an exposed study. You really need to feel comfortable with the person that you are working with and that's, basically, picking you apart, and working with that. Because it's you, its not an instrument sitting in front of you, or, or something that you're playing through, it's yourself. And that can be confronting, I think, so I think it's really important that you have a really good relationship with that person.

Phoebe's assertion that criticism is confronting to someone whose instrument is being built suggests that the relationship between teacher and student needs to be a close, safe and trusting one. It is not the first time I have heard the comment "we are our instrument".

It's a very collaborative process

Phoebe feels that Clarice adapts her teaching to Phoebe's learning style and that they share a collaborative approach.

> I think I respond really well to the way Clarice works, and she also responds well to the way I learn, so often she'll do a lot of mimicking. She'll explain if necessary and she's great like that, she'll explain everything that's going on and answer all my questions, of which I have many, but generally it's pretty fast and she'll go, "ok", and sing it, and "you do it like this" and just sing another way and let me pick, alright, well that's the better way and I'm going to try and sort of mimic that. And it's generally pretty fast like that: she never sits and criticizes; it's a very collaborative process, which we're both happy to be a part of.

According to Phoebe, Clarice's pedagogy is collaborative, fast moving, sensate, aural, explanatory and showing strong relatedness between teacher and student. The intellectual process Phoebe refers to shows the difficulty she has regarding understanding the embodiment of sound and its physical processes.

More than just a teacher

Phoebe feels the role of a singing teacher is more than just a teacher, that her singing teacher is a mentor and friend, and that a dictatorial relationship cannot exist between teacher and student. She believes that teaching singing can be likened to teaching elite athletes, commenting,

> I think a singing teacher is a lot more than just a teacher, per se. If you look at coaches of football teams, and if you bring a sport analogy into it, they're often a mentor and because of the nature of the way that singers and sportspeople have to train their bodies as well as their intellect, as well as their emotions, I think because of the nature of what I guess anyone does at their elite–or endeavouring to be elite [level], it has to be more than a teacher: it can't be a dictatorial sort of relationship.

Phoebe articulates the complexity of the singing teaching and learning relationship, seeing her teacher as friend, mentor, and emotional supporter. Simultaneously she acknowledges there are boundaries to the relationship, given the student/teacher dynamic. We talk about the challenges of performing and the nerves that can impact upon a

performance, and of the teacher who counsels her through the performance. Phoebe remarks, you need a singing teacher, or someone who understands that all of those things happen and that's so much about you and your mental position, and they've gotta be really willing to understand that as well.

Phoebe articulates the elite nature of learning to sing opera and the importance of one's teacher in providing support during times of high stress, such as during performance season.

This is my happy place

While Phoebe acknowledges her nerves, she nevertheless loves performing. She laughs as she recounts a pivotal performing experience,

> I love it, I love it, I feel at home, I've always felt like that, it's the only place I feel like, "yeah this is where I'm meant to be", and I just feel comfortable. Probably the first time I actually really recognised the fact, is I did a play in year nine and year ten and I was on stage the entire one and a half hours and there was no interval and it was a really kind of intense play, and I just remember being on stage the entire time feeling like, "I could just live here: this is my happy place where I feel most at home", and you know: I know who I am here.

Phoebe's comfort on stage is an important qualifier for her future career, showing that she is most at ease in a place where others might be terrified to stand and indicating that she feels in control during performance.

Everyone's watching you and judging you

While Phoebe enjoys her vocal performance classes she acknowledges the difficulty of performing in front of her friends and peers.

> It's a little bit nerve racking, just because you know that everyone's watching you and judging you, in a nice way, but still, it's a little bit nerve racking. There's a little bit of the edge of "well you're still our competition".

Phoebe's perception of her peers underlines the competitive nature of the opera industry, where friends compete for roles and work. Nevertheless, Phoebe feels the conservatoire can be a positive, collaborative space. She talks briefly about an upcoming ensemble project:

We all get to work on putting together the ensemble, which we don't normally get to do, so it's good in building relationships between peers, I mean singers we're generally close anyway, you know, people go, "oh there are the singers outside the café again", and I generally try to stay low a little bit!

As we laugh and talk about opera singer personalities, we discuss the competitive nature of the industry and the common perception that singers are loud, glamorous and not very smart. Phoebe provides a rationale for the glamour that I had never previously considered:

It's such an intellectual thing that we do and perhaps the [reason] singers like to dress up and be loud and extravagant is: we're our instrument, so we've gotta present ourselves well…it's a little bit about presenting you as your instrument.

You are your instrument

Phoebe talks about the value she places on the learning and teaching relationship with her singing teacher and in doing so articulates the subtle differences she perceives exist between singer and musician, and the journey to becoming a professional performer.

It would probably be a combination of building relationship with someone that you can trust, and that you know has your best interests at heart, and will help you grow and develop as a musician, as a singer, as…I think they're both the same thing, despite popular opinion. I differentiate that because 'musician' I would term as the emotional, the intellectual process that goes into making music as an art; and then 'singer' as in physical anatomy that we work with…and I think just as a person…you present yourselves as a singer and you are your instrument and who you are is what people will pay or not pay money to see. You've got to feel comfortable getting up there in vocal performance class or whatever it might be; on the opera house stage, you've gotta feel comfortable enough in yourself and I think that a part of that journey is definitely the one-to-one singing lessons and the relationship with the teacher.

Not much exists between study and career

Phoebe is uncertain about what she expects to do once she has finished her degree, in two years time, remarking, I think there are some things I'm not ready to do… I think it's a difficult thing because not much exists between study and career.

In the meantime, Phoebe is planning to travel to Europe at the end of the year with her musician boyfriend, and is working four jobs to fund her trip. They plan to be away for two months over December and January, intending to visit Germany, Austria and other

places, a musician's tour incorporating concerts and visits to European conservatoires. She laughs as she comments, it's a bizarre time to go, but it's cheaper!

<p style="text-align:center">**********</p>

Lesson excerpt: this is not a trainer aria!

The excerpt is taken from the end of the first recorded lesson, when Phoebe is given a new Mozart aria to learn.

"And the other thing is we could decide whether we are going to do something about Annius or not. Annio–remember the Mozart aria?" asks Clarice.

Phoebe replies jokingly, "oh yeah, the one that you said that 'I don't think you can sing that in public probably for a couple of years'?"

They smile at each other. Clarice declares, "mm, well, I'm changing my mind. I have changed my mind. I think that you can more easily sing it, in fact I'm thinking of giving you something worse." Clarice's demeanour is not one of guilt, but of triumph. She laughs, "Like maybe the Sextus aria which is called Deh, per questo istante solo. It's a big aria but it's great!"

As Clarice walks around the piano to the bookshelf she shakes her index finger lightly and cautions, "You have to learn it first. Whether it's in public or not depends *entirely* on how you sing it." Clarice quickly thumbs through a compilation of Italian arias and flips the book to the correct page number. "The hard thing about this is that it's very legato and goes up down, up down, very high." She points up and down, mirroring her words as she speaks. "It's lovely. Just as a piece of music it's beautiful." Phoebe murmurs in agreement, "mmm. What's it about?"

Clarice sits on the piano stool, smoothing her skirt. "Oh, excellent question, let's have a look. How many times have I done this with Mezzo-sopranos? Many times. Do I know it word for word? No I do not. Shame on me! Right, let's look together."

Clarice reads through the synopsis and finishes, "And, there's a whole lot of things. So, so although Sesto loves Vitellia, he says he will– "

Phoebe interjects– "he loves HER?"

"–kill his best friend–" continues Clarice.

Phoebe exclaims again, "but she–he's going to marry her! Oh!"

Clarice replies, "that's right!", smiles at Phoebe and folds her arms. "Anyway, so it's found out that Sesto is intending to kill Titus, and of course then Titus HAS to kill his friend, Sesto. So–"

"does he die?" interjects Phoebe again.

Clarice wrinkles her nose, grins and says, "nuh, so the opera is called La Clemenza–the clemency–the mercy–of Titus."

Phoebe, in sudden understanding, exclaims, "Ahhhhh!"

Clarice smiles at Phoebe, takes her elbow off the piano. "Lucky for Sesto!" she remarks wryly, and plays the first chords of the accompaniment.

This is a first sight-reading of the aria. They sing it together, Phoebe peering at the music over Clarice's right shoulder. She is wearing her glasses. She is having some difficulty reading the music and Clarice occasionally points to the music as Phoebe turns the pages. Clarice plays the melody in her right hand, assisting in the sight-reading exercise. The first part of the aria is slow and stately. Clarice stops after the first section and asks: "What thinkst thou?" Phoebe says, "I like it!" They laugh together as she states, "you're good at choosing things I like!"

Clarice remarks, "This is not a trainer aria! This is SO not a trainer aria. This is a double aria, for one thing, in fact it's a kind of triple aria, in that it has a slow section, a fast section and then a kind of little cadenza at the end." Phoebe sighs excitedly, "Oooh!", while Clarice continues, "And you can see that it's long", flipping the pages of the score to show the length. "But it's beautiful, and it does sit, for the most part, in the middle range. It doesn't require any terrible extremes and actually I don't think it requires anything you can't do." Clarice turns and looks levelly at Phoebe. "But we'll just see how it goes. We'll blast through the rest of it to give you an idea, so–"

They commence singing the B section of the aria, which is faster than the earlier section. Clarice plays the piano with skill and sensitivity. Clarice then says "you get the idea, and then it goes–" and plays through the florid third section. Phoebe hums through this section as she struggles to follow the vocal line, peering over Clarice's right shoulder at the score. "Wow!" she says.

Clarice finishes the aria accompaniment with a flourish. "It is wonderful, isn't it!" says Clarice, and Phoebe responds cheerfully, "Yes, I like it!". Clarice, smiling at Phoebe, says, "Good, good. Well, since we didn't seem to be having a whole lot of success with Annius, let's go for broke here! So, you could borrow this, or just go to the Bärenreiter score, probably is the thing to do. Bärenreiter's the blue one." Phoebe mutters: "yep, yep!" as she writes the name of the aria in her diary. Clarice, speaking the Italian title slowly and clearly, says, "and take it from that. So it's Deh per questo…D. E. H.; Deh per questo, istante solo."

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Commentary: apprenticeship

A number of pedagogical approaches are taking place in this lesson segment. The first approach is a scaffold into the life-world of the character. Phoebe's first question to Clarice is concerned with context: what is the aria about? Phoebe needs to know this so that she will know how to approach the musical and expressive elements of the aria; how the work might be staged; her character's motivations and when the aria takes place; and where and to whom the aria is sung.

Clarice's recitation of the synopsis and reflection on the text is a teaser for Phoebe. She is encouraging Phoebe to find out the smaller details for herself, showing her knowledge of the opera and revealing her own content knowledge, placing the aria in context about her own teaching practice and alerting Phoebe to her experience in teaching both the aria and mezzo-soprani generally.

The second approach is to guide Phoebe through a rendition of the aria, to explain its form, its quality, and its difficulty. It situates the aria, allowing Phoebe to gain an aural and visual foothold on its style and complexity. Clarice also insists that Phoebe sight-read the aria, which scaffolds Phoebe into processes that Clarice sees as important in the practice of classical music.

By demonstrating to Phoebe that particular scores are preferred over others, Clarice is alerting Phoebe to consider her musical sources and knowing which ones are acceptable versions for professional singers. By letting Phoebe know that the aria is commonly sung by mezzo-soprani, she is teaching Phoebe about common mezzo arias and their place in the canon of operatic material. She is also ensuring that Phoebe become an independent learner by insisting that she locate the aria herself.

Clarice's subtle encouragement of Phoebe's ability points to a belief Clarice has about Phoebe's potential. Clarice desires that Phoebe maintain a careful and thorough practice regime; she has a strong belief in Phoebe's ability, and she encourages Phoebe's goal setting to ensure good progress.

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Clarice: the thinker

I had asked my participants to respond via email to a number of questions regarding the work they were doing with their students, midway through the video phase of the study. While Phoebe' responses were extremely brief and related mainly to repertoire, Clarice's responses were highly detailed, revealing her profound understanding of the complexities of singing teaching and learning.

Lesson structure

One of the questions asked Clarice to explain the structure of a typical singing lesson. Clarice revealed that her lesson structure is similar to that of many singing teachers (see Gaunt, 2008). For singers, artistry commonly must come after most of the technical elements have been mastered, as poor technique can interfere with the singer's ability to communicate artistic ideas, therefore for Clarice a singing lesson usually begins with a check of vocal coordination and techniques before moving to repertoire and artistry, and finishes with a brief summation of the lesson and planning for the next series of events.

A different kind of learning

I had asked Clarice to discuss Phoebe's technical progress and her response revealed her profound understanding of Phoebe's approach to learning, and her own connectedness to the student.

> Phoebe is still establishing co-ordinations, and is sometimes a bit mystified by the changes that one new coordinative achievement can wreak on her sensations. She is delightfully unable to verbalise what she feels or thinks is happening–but this sometimes leads to some consternation on both our parts, mine mainly because I'm pretty sure I know what is going on but am surprised at Fee's uncharacteristic verbal block. It just goes to show what a different kind of learning singing is. She is also learning to associate sensation with sound, and that changes too. Work is ongoing.

Phoebe's difficulty in explaining physical sensations had not gone unnoticed by Clarice. Clarice put this down to the embodiment of singing, given her acknowledgement of Phoebe's intellect and curiosity.

The adventure with Phoebe is charting a course

Given Clarice's admission that singing teaching can be highly relational, her written explanation of this aspect of the partnership between her and Phoebe was frank and perceptive.

It's a pretty honest and productive relationship. There is respect and affection on both sides, and good progress. That reflects an effective teaching/learning relationship. There are occasional issues which impact on the student that can de-stabilize the normal teaching/learning situation. Phoebe is a very open and perceptive student, and our relationship has been–and is–of remarkable quality. She is, however, very alert to what she perceives as disapproval from me, and once or twice this semester has nailed me down to expressing an honest reaction which hasn't pleased her. However, we have worked our way through it. The adventure with Phoebe is charting a course with this rather unusual but very rich young personality.

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Lesson excerpt: ear habits and body habits.

This lesson excerpt is from early in the semester, a few weeks after the first excerpt, and at the beginning of the lesson. Clarice and Phoebe are about to rehearse Torna di Tito a lato, from La Clemenza di Tito by Mozart, sung by the character Annio. Clarice accompanies Phoebe on piano, and plays the first bar introduction.

Figure 18: Act II, Scene I. Aria *Torna di Tito a lato*, from *La Clemenza di Tito*, K. 621, by Mozart. Open source. All other excerpts are from the same score and are not numbered.

Clarice recites in time in the rest passages bars four and five: "Release open, release and". She is playing the melody in her right hand throughout the excerpt.

Phoebe frequently frowns, shakes her head, and occasionally starts, as if she is making a mistake. Right before she stops (in the B section of the song, at "I'immagine ti sta") she rubs her cheekbones, squawks dramatically and says "ah!" exclaiming, "sorry!"

Clarice stops playing and asks, "Are you alright?" Phoebe smiles and says, "Sorry, it's kind of just going 'I don't want to do this', sorry!" Phoebe gestures with her hands, waving them together and apart, perhaps as if simulating a vocal fold wave.

Clarice replies sympathetically, "Is it? It's okay, it's okay. It's always an interesting thing going from something that you've just polished to something which is hardly vocalised, right? And so it's pretty tempting to think 'oh I'm singing badly' when in fact it's 'oh dear I

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don't know this very well', and 'my voice isn't used to this' and 'it doesn't have a muscle memory of its own at this stage'."

Phoebe had sung in the morning performance class and is also battling a cold. She explains, "I think it's a little bit also my voice has just gone 'I've done what I need to do and now I need to sleep because you've been mean to me all week'–not you! Me! I've been mean to it, yeah!" She laughs as she points at herself. They talk over the top of each other.

Clarice remarks, "gotcha, gotcha. I understand! Did it feel tired after this morning, throat wise?"

Phoebe explains, smiling, "not tired but it feels like it wants to shut down, it's like, well that's what you told me and so, you know…it just feels like it's not moving."

Clarice says sympathetically: "Yeah, I understand that. And sometimes it happens just after lunch, when you've eaten something, it can be a bit uncooperative too. We've found that, I think, a bit, before. I think it's worth doing a bit of … just a bit of rough work on it."

Phoebe comments, "it just feels like it's not moving as fast as it"–she shakes her hand tightly up and down, wrist stiff, to demonstrate. Clarice agrees, saying "yeah, and it's not as

balanced, as in it's": she models two ways of singing the first phrase: "little

bit: something like". Each vocal model is a little bit different in sound quality.

Clarice prepares the next phrase: "Three and open:"

Phoebe sings again: . Clarice makes the same directives as earlier, "release, open, release and". The phrase sounds more settled. Clarice stops playing and says: "The other good thing about this, it's a really great thing to work on for flexibility of diaphragm."

She walks around from the piano and into shot. She places her left hand behind her back and outstretches her right hand, palm up. She asks Phoebe: "please show me what your diaphragm's going to do." "Here, on your hand?" asks Phoebe. Clarice replies, "on my hand, please."

Clarice gives the start note "tor", then they sing the first phrase together, down the octave. Phoebe demonstrates what she thinks her diaphragm will do using her right hand as an indicator, by gently pressing down on Clarice's hand during the phrase, and inclining her head in time. She maintains a light touch. Then Clarice repeats the last two notes of the

phrase, and demonstrates a touch more vigorously, pushing her hand down with her right hand, and then raising her hand at the end of the phrase, on the penultimate and final notes. Phoebe looks and sounds very confused as she struggles to understand what has just happened.

Clarice pats Phoebe's palm encouragingly with her right hand and explains Italianate feminine endings while Phoebe listens. Phoebe says slowly, "This seems really scary to me, because…" Their hands drop gently away.

Clarice replies: "is it? Because you think you'd be supporting right to the end?" Clarice pushes down both hands held in front of her body to denote diaphragmatic movement. She is still looking intently at Phoebe. Phoebe places her hands in a diamond shape on her belly, and says, "Um, no, yeah. Don't really know why." Her words dribble off.

Clarice looks candidly at Phoebe and says, "let's try, let's try", with a reassuring smile on her face. Phoebe turns back to the music, slightly away from Clarice, and places her hands on her abdomen.

Clarice remarks, "It's actually a very nice feeling, eventually, I think. It may destabilise you for a little while, but I don't think you will necessarily; it's just a matter of understanding and thinking." One hand is near her head, the other by her hip, and she turns her hands slightly in contrary motion, to denote a physical concept of space for the diaphragm to drop and create space for the lungs to expand and for the voice to find pharyngeal space.

"So." Clarice demonstrates the starting note. Phoebe imitates the starting phrase, which sounds more settled than the first attempt. Clarice exclaims, "perfect!" Clarice is moving with the phrases, using her interlocked hands to denote rising and falling diaphragmatic movement, singing along with Phoebe. Clarice bends her knees into the phrases. Clarice also includes the phrase "breathe, and".

As Phoebe finishes the phrase, Clarice asks: "how does that feel?"
Phoebe replies, "good. Just weird mentally, to be honest. But that's okay".
Clarice replies, "We talked about this a long time ago, but we haven't talked about it specifically for quite a while."

Phoebe, swinging her arms, says, "I, I remember having talked about it but I've never known that… I just know I have to give more on the second to last". Clarice rejoins, "and that's probably really the best way of thinking about it… it'll be very, very good doing this, for you. It's just a set of body habits as much as it is a set of ear habits."

Clarice accompanies Phoebe for the next phrase, using her left hand (sweeping through the shot) to continue the impression of movement through the phrase. Clarice exclaims: "this is actually very good! How does it feel?" Phoebe says "good!" Clarice replies,

"yep? It really is good!" Phoebe nods her head, smiling, saying "less confusing than I felt in my mind. I just went: silly mind, just do it!".

The song returns to the A section at bar thirty-six. Phoebe moves with the phrases, swaying to denote movement of the sound and perhaps musical expression. Clarice instructs: "Breathe, open".

When Phoebe sings she frowns and shakes her head as the top note is unsettled. Clarice calls out "keep going", then "well done!" as Phoebe sings the final strong top note. As Phoebe sings the last two phrases, Clarice clicks the beat, says "drop the air in" for the second 'Torna', and the sound is appreciably different–more open and free– from the first sound.

Clarice applauds: "Brava! But gee it's not easy, is it? Oh my gosh!" Phoebe replies, "no, but for some reason, it was harder to do, I don't know, something that I'm cracking on". Phoebe grabs at her throat in a clutching gesture, and makes a "mwaher" sound. She bites her fingers gently.

Clarice asks, "The D? The crack is D actually, yes it was a bit dodgy. You just weren't ready for it, I think." Clarice then sings the phrase, 'torna e l'error passato, con replicate emenda'. "That was the troublesome one, wasn't it?" Clarice sings the top note of the phrase. The sound spins and is "couvert", with lots of overtones audible. It is a beautiful sound.

Phoebe exclaims, "I mean but that's really sad because in that one I actually went "okay, so now I know that it starts here, and I know that I have to prepare it right at the start and then it just didn't work, and the next one I just went, "oh, well stuff that" and it worked!" Phoebe flings her arm out and grins ruefully.

Clarice laughs and says, "Remember we've said that one of the tricky things is that you feel you have to go "or" to get the top note? And in fact you really just have to go "stuff that" and just go right through!" She is laughing. Phoebe, laughing too, says "yeah. You know what I think of that!" She points and gestures, mimicking Clarice. "That's what I think of that!"

Clarice plays a guide note on the piano, then sings "con. Breathe, and". Phoebe sings

the high phrase again. Clarice models the phrase *con repli_ca_te e_men _ da pr* again, but

this time with a pinched and rather uncontrolled sound on the top note, raising her larynx

and gesturing with her hand. She diagnoses, "That is what was causing you the trouble". She

then sings the phrase again with freer sounding and "spun" tone, and with overtones

audible. Phoebe nods while listening. She sings this unconvincingly and the remaining part of

the phrase *fe _ del _ tà,_____* . Her sound is a little tight, particularly on the 'ta'.

Phoebe begins the phrase again, but the note cracks on 'ta' and Phoebe grabs her

throat and winces and says "hmm!" in a high-pitched cry. "It's just, yeah." Clarice asks, "is it

hurting?" Phoebe answers, "no, it's just not working." Phoebe opens and shuts her hands in

front of her, spasmodically. Clarice reassures her: "don't worry. Don't worry. Be a little more

gung ho. Gung ho's okay, it's ok." Clarice sings the 'fedel' phrase, then appears back in shot,

grabs Phoebe's hand in hers and say "it's about:" as she sings 'fedelta', gently pulls Phoebe

from one side of the room to the other in a sweeping movement, supporting Phoebe's upper

back with her left hand as Phoebe moves through the movement. It looks like a dance

movement.

Phoebe exclaims happily, "oh that's nice!" as they laugh together. "I like that!"

Clarice says, "mm, have a little dance with yourself." Phoebe recites "a rum-pum-pum-pum"

as she pirouettes gently, lifting her arms in a ballet gesture.

"Exactly!" says Clarice. She sings the phrase again and although she is out of shot footsteps

can be heard. As she sings Phoebe is watching Clarice's off camera movements and exclaims,

"can I run like that?" as she gracefully moves toward the far end of the room.

Clarice replies, "oh sure, go for it!" She sings the first four notes of the phrase and

begins to play the piano part. Phoebe sings the phrase, and, as she does, she moves in a

balletic motion to the end of the room for the high note, and returns to the piano at the end of

the phrase, curtseying slightly at the end of the phrase, on the tonic note. She is smiling

broadly. Her singing is appreciably freer than before.

Phoebe sighs happily, "oh, that felt nice! Huh!" She releases her curtsey in a relieved

body slump. Clarice comments, "it's lovely, isn't it? It's just …it's an image or a

physicalisation of the fact that you need extra breath to get up there, otherwise it just goes

'hoh'!" Phoebe nods and smiles as she says "yeah and it's kind of making me… because it's

like when I said 'I know what I have to prepare' and I tried to prepare, then it didn't happen,

but I think, in a way, you need to get it in from your mind to your body. There's a bit of a

wall there, and you have to climb over the wall, or dig under the wall." As she speaks, she mirrors her words by creating a visual image of the wall with her hands.

Clarice counsels, "be inappropriate. Go with your body. One of the things we're learning to do here is actually just figuring out what bodies can do–and, when you know what your body can do. Especially in here: you have expert feedback, really expert feedback, and I can say to you, hmm 'don't think so', and plus we have the exchange where I ask you if you go 'wrbwrbwrwbr': 'did that hurt?'. If it didn't hurt, then it's fine!"

Clarice says: "Let's go from , where it comes back, um it could be sort of… thirty-five, or thirty-six?" She sings the phrase. Phoebe sings the phrase through, more cleanly and smoothly than at the beginning of the lesson, while Clarice calls out reassuring comments from behind the piano, where she is playing the accompaniment. Clarice uses the same phrase "drop the air in" during the penultimate high phrase of the song, and she points to behind Phoebe's head as Phoebe rubs her cheekbones lightly and looks uncertainly at Clarice about the note. Clarice says "beautiful!" in the final rest, before finishing the song accompaniment's final three bars.

Clarice says, "lovely!" Phoebe, cocking her arms triumphantly, says, "yeah!" She breathes in, then exhales slowly and quietly, and beams at Clarice.

"Lovely!"

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Commentary: embodying sound

This lesson excerpt reveals the difficulty in communicating concepts regarding the embodiment of sound. Partly because she is battling a cold, Phoebe has trouble with some high notes, and Clarice tries a series of pedagogical approaches to assist with vocal stability. She firstly takes a musical expressiveness approach, where she requires Phoebe to learn about Italianate syllabic inflection. This helps Phoebe grasp how physical sensation aligns with musical expression and stylistic requirements of the music.

Next, Clarice talks to Phoebe about how to physically approach the high notes, alerting Phoebe's intellect to what needs to happen. She articulates concepts using lightly scientific language, showing a deep knowledge of vocal physiology and physics.

Third, Clarice models nearly all the phrases a good way and a poor way, so that Phoebe can refer to an aural model. Fourth, Clarice employs a kinaesthetic approach–having Phoebe move about the room, which allows Phoebe to loosen up her body so that it will free up her air/ breathing/ support and loosen the top notes.

Fifth, Clarice encourages Phoebe to articulate her understanding of technical concepts, knowing that if Phoebe can discuss her ideas she will be able to see if Phoebe has the right concept.

Finally, Clarice encourages free dialogue, based on trust and reciprocity, showing Phoebe that she can articulate her problems verbally and without fear of ridicule. Clarice is encouraging of Phoebe's efforts and there is a sense of strong relatedness between teacher and student in this lesson.

<p style="text-align:center">**********</p>

Phoebe: developing her whole self

I just wanted to be me before I was what I do

Phoebe and I are sitting in the bowels of the Con library, more than a year after our first meeting and almost a year to the day after the video excerpts chosen for analysis were recorded. She has been battling glandular fever the last few months, but her illness has not affected her voice, surprisingly. While Phoebe has been frustrated by her illness, considering her health conscious attitude, she reports Clarice has been compassionate and caring during this time.

Phoebe feels that Clarice respects her and allows her to discover things for herself. She talks about her discussions with Clarice from the previous year, when she had wanted to travel overseas on a learning exchange in second semester. Phoebe had already travelled to Europe with her boyfriend during the summer break, and Clarice had counselled Phoebe about the wisdom of travelling overseas twice in a year. Phoebe explains.

I knew I needed to travel. I just needed the time and the space to do what I wanted to do BEFORE being a singer, because I just wanted to be me before I was what I do…I think being a singer is definitely part of your identity, even if you don't want it to be! I think it definitely is, but I think you need to have a really good sense of who you are without that, because then, for a number of reasons… it's really good that Clarice and I worked through me thinking "this is what I think I can do" and her thinking, "well, here's a different perspective", which was great. And of course, her opinion was part of my decision to stay, but I needed to come to my own decision myself, you know.

The summer travel has cemented Phoebe's desire to be a singer and to identify in this role. It has had significant impact on her approach to her career and understanding of musical style.

The whole experience made me really, really driven. I mean, one thing is I have a whole lot of musical information in my head, and really wanted to put that into practice, like for example, having a really good understanding of, say, Mozartian style, and I came back and it was WOW! It has finally clicked, just because I'd been hearing that, and seeing the places where this music comes from, especially in opera, it's really so important.

I have also noticed a change in Phoebe's demeanour from a year prior. While she talks cheerfully and laughs as readily as in the first interview, she seems more mature and more goal-focused, with her more efficient responses suggesting a greater understanding of herself and the vocal concepts we are discussing.

Starting to settle

Phoebe's voice is developing well and vocal techniques she found difficult a year prior are now making more sense.

It's just moving really quickly, which is great. Obviously it [vocal technique] doesn't move quickly, that's the thing about it, but all the things we're doing are starting to settle. Probably position of the sound, which I probably needed to think about a lot more then, I have to think quite a lot about opening it up, just because it's there and I need to get the open space behind the forward position. The coordination and it all happening at once is more there, more solid… I had a really good lesson yesterday and, a lot of things I've been working for just all happened.

Phoebe's approach to Mozart style is beginning to settle too. We talk about the two arias she learnt and which I have chosen for the video excerpts: *Torna di Tito a lato*, and *Deh*

per questo istante solo, which are both from *La Clemenza di Tito*. We look at the excerpt of *Torna* and Phoebe cringes and laughs as she hears herself sing. Haha, that was crap! I'm making up that melody. What am I doing?! My voice is so different, in a different place and more flexible as well.

It was a new body thing, it was a new ear thing

We talk about the aria *Deh per questo* and Phoebe comments,

> That aria just really sits well in my body now, probably a million times more than it did last year. We've moved onto a couple of other Mozart, which is cool. The biggest thing is that arias have a long period that they need to settle in your body, as compared to – well art songs do too, but it's quite different than an aria. An exciting process. Arias often have a giant structure about them, and art songs will be the window of the house, and an aria can be an entire house.

I laugh and add *and sometimes the mountain behind the house!* We chuckle together as we discuss musical artistry. Phoebe is keenly aware of the embodiment of singing and the time it takes for arias to physically embed in the vocal apparatus. As we look at the videos, Phoebe explains further about Mozart style and its embodiment.

> Something that I can actually do now, is Mozartian style. She actually told me the other day, "I thought you'd never get it! I was going to abandon it!" I just understood it [after coming back]. I didn't understand it [last year] because it wasn't in my body and I didn't know how to create that. So hopefully I can do that better now! … It was super hard for me to do *Torna*, because it was SO new. It was a new body thing, it was a new ear thing.

I ask, *do you think as we get better at things the ears and the body have a chance to adjust faster*?

> They know what they need to do. The first thing you need to do is understand what you need to do, or what you're being asked to do. I think the second thing is to be able to embody it, which I think is quite different. The third thing is to be able to do it all the time!

Phoebe's explanation of singing mastery indicates superior self-perception about how she learns. Her referral to "body thing and ear thing" suggests a mirroring of words frequently used by Clarice, but her subsequent lightning-fast tripartite explanation of vocal mastery is impressive in its succinct encapsulation of learning modes. In her explanation I am

reminded of many learning theories that analyse the route from novice to master. It seems Phoebe has created her own definition.

Stop thinking!

Phoebe explains how good she felt when Clarice physicalised Mozart style through dance movements and elaborates,

> Now it's progressed. Instead of just being on the phrase it's the rhythm of the breath taking as well, and that's really important. I like physical references, the same as I like aural references, because it's far easier. I like thinking about things, I'm a very intellectually based person but with singing, it just gets too complicated for me, and even Clarice will say to me "stop thinking"!

Phoebe, even with her remarkable capacity for easily communicating complex ideas has trouble articulating the embodied nature of the human voice–as she speaks her hands move wildly about her head to illustrate her point.

It's that sort of input which I really appreciate

Phoebe feels that Clarice's teaching is incremental, explaining I don't think you can learn singing unless it's incrementally, actually, because if you get everything at once, it's "argh!" Clarice still sings along at times with Phoebe, as we observe in the excerpt. Phoebe perceives it to be helpful simultaneous feedback.

> I think it's her showing "it's like this", the aural input. It's either to do with placement of the sound, I suppose, or the style. I find that a lot of teachers at the Con tend to demonstrate in that way because it's easier. It's that sort of input which I really appreciate.

As we watch the excerpt, Phoebe explains how she still moves about to free up the voice. I stomp now if I'm doing runs or something. I sometimes ask to walk around, or she says to walk around.

I know exactly what I want to be doing

Phoebe was recently awarded a music scholarship, enabling her to live at College, close to the Conservatorium campus. As a result, Phoebe doesn't have to work four jobs any more and finds she has time to practice two hours a day, sometimes more.

I really feel like I know exactly what I want to be doing… I like when there's not necessarily people around. I don't like being in there when there's people outside waiting for the practice room! I like it being my time, and I think it's probably mentally more important for me to be in the right headspace at that time.

Phoebe explains how she structures learning a new song. She always marks a new piece with the beats, followed by phrase-by-phrase incremental learning and comments,

I think it's been a process as I've had more and more music to learn, that I just have to go "right, it needs to be solid"–it was always solid and I've always learned my music, but sometimes it was just for whatever reason: exhaustion, sickness, travel exhaustion, emotion, whatever, I just needed to know that my work would be there.

Her methodical music learning again displays Phoebe's tendency to work hard. Her memory is good, she explains, which she feels is one less thing to worry about: we can just work on other things. Phoebe's structured and careful learning regime indicates a singer whose approach is already professionalised, and who sees opera as her career path.

It's the big unknown question of my life

Phoebe understands the long wait between finishing uni and working in the profession and still does not really know what she will do after completing her degree, commenting wryly: It's all a bit unknown, it's the big unknown question of my life at the moment! Especially for musicians. Even more so for singers, because I have a good ten years before I can get a job.

Nevertheless, Phoebe's current singing activities include work in an youth opera training company and it appears that Phoebe is single-minded in her quest to pursue this difficult, albeit rewarding career path.

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Clarice: the enabler

She likes to know why

For the final interview, Clarice has travelled interstate to a conservatoire as keynote for a singing seminar and we have made hurried plans to meet. We are sitting in an office on the third floor, the late afternoon sun streaming through the window. Clarice is visibly weary, having not slept well the night before. She has been at the seminar all day, which included

her teaching and taking master classes. She holds her sunglasses as we talk and immediately asks if she can remove her shoes. I feel embarrassed for not providing any refreshment, frustrated by the rush and tumble of hasty travel plans. As I set up the recording equipment, I ask Clarice how Phoebe copes with her teaching approach.

> She generally copes with modelling quite well, but I do a lot of it [and] she likes to talk about technique. I probably have talked explicitly about technical things and their underlying possible causes with Phoebe more than most, simply because she likes it. She likes to know why. Most people are completely uninterested.

Clarice and I chuckle together, sharing our complicit knowledge about how some students mentally switch off at the mention of vocal physiology. Phoebe is unlike the norm.

Fly on that sensation

Clarice believes singing can be learnt in four ways. She explains her approach in some detail.

> They can understand, they can feel, they can hear, they can look, and they're the four main ways in which we figure it out, I think. Hearing probably should come third. Understanding is a combination of verbal and sound cues and repetition of experience, particularly kinaesthetic experience. Making that explicit is an attempt to give them the tools.

> I also try to make it clear that a lot of the warm up process is about muscular sensation and coordination, and that they then should take that into a sort of half-way house which is probably a good forty percent of the lesson, which is: how do your optimal ones–or the best ones you can manage at the time–coordinations work with this phrase, technical and articulatory challenges? And this phrase, and this phrase, and how can you put them together, and do it to the point where you can just feel it going on, that you eventually stop thinking so analytically and start to feel it, and leave it for that lesson. And then you can fly on that sensation for a while, which is so lovely. So really I try to say to them, you have to try to replicate that feeling at home.

Clarice's range of pedagogical strategies ensures a replicable model for home practice. I am reminded of her comments regarding her early educational experiences, and her desire to ensure learning is efficient and long-lasting. She continues,

> For the last ten, fifteen or maybe twenty percent of the lesson you can sing for musical or expressive purposes or just so you don't go completely nuts! For you *do* have expressive impulses and they *do* need to be nurtured, otherwise, if they have been

ignored for so long that you die musically and expressively, there's not much point in having a beautiful voice. Although a beautiful voice can be remarkably emotionally expressive, just on the sheer quality of sound!

This comment about the emotionally expressive quality of a beautiful voice is one I've heard before and I sense that having this vocal quality is not one that can necessarily be taught: it appears to be innate.

Having to be retooled

We talk about Phoebe's plans to travel twice in the previous year. Phoebe had made plans to travel to Europe for two months over the summer break with her boyfriend. Partway through the semester she had also told Clarice of her desire to go on a learning exchange to Germany later the same year. Clarice was concerned by this decision to travel twice in a year while Phoebe's technique was still settling. She had inadvertently revealed her concern, which Phoebe had immediately noticed. Over the course of the semester the two frequently discussed this exchange opportunity, before Phoebe decided not to go, choosing to remain at the Conservatorium until the end of her degree. Choosing her words carefully, Clarice explains her wariness.

I've had lots of exchange students and I've had a couple of my strong singers go away and come back having to be… retooled, in a couple of cases quite seriously retooled. That lost them a considerable amount of time. It's quite obvious there's work to be done [with Phoebe], and all the more so because of the degree of responsibility that I feel to someone like this singer… It's interesting to see: she did go away in November and came back in mid-January, a little earlier, with glandular fever; however, her person has grown considerably.

Clarice perceives that overseas study with other teachers may be detrimental to Phoebe's still settling vocal technique. However, Phoebe's recent trip has been beneficial both personally and stylistically. One of the things I think *has* happened is she has seen quite a bit of opera while she was away, and done some active listening. And I think that has really helped her.

I will come round to the side of the angels

As we chat about Phoebe's European travel during the summer break, I remark, *it seems to me there's a level of trust and honesty, which appears really important for your ongoing relationship.* Clarice grins, confessing,

It's actually almost to the level of discomfort from my point of view, from this sense only. She is SO perceptive of the slightest twitch of the face or tone of the voice, and she just asks straight out about my reaction, and because I am the world's worst liar, I tell her. I really try not to, but I never succeed! [we laugh together merrily.] I'm a really terrible liar, terrible, terrible! And with somebody like her, I just can't.

There's a few times where she's saying: "what are you saying, Clarice?" I mimic Phoebe's voice as I recall a scene in the videos. Clarice laughs and exclaims,

Yes, that's exactly what happens! … I remember I said to her, "I accept that that's what you are going to do", and I've also said to her, and it's a truthful thing, that I can be a bit uncompromising, I think, or a bit inflexible in the short term. But in the long term, I hope I can come around to the side of the angels and realise it's not about me; it's about someone else. I have good reasons for what I said, but in the end, no matter how "right" I might or might not be, you can't tell someone what to feel or what to experience, you can only let them experience it and then be there for them.

Clarice tries not to be a dictatorial teacher, preferring that her students understand through experience, but guiding them too. Phoebe's recollection of events seems to bear this out.

The kind of depth where you both cry

Clarice sees the relationship between her and Phoebe to have profound depth, aligned to the music that mutually moves them. She describes this depth.

Quite often I have to do a double take, thinking, "is this really what I just heard?" I don't just mean in terms of sound, I mean in terms of perception, and emotional depth. In probably fifteen years of full time teaching, she would be the second student with whom I've had that kind of depth. This is the kind of depth where you both cry when you play through a Strauss song, and she'll say "can I sing that?" [excellent mimicry of Phoebe's tone of voice and delivery] and I'll say "yeah." It's that kind of understanding of the things that to me are the deepest things in my life, and especially from someone who is so young, which is remarkable. I have to be careful to manage that and not to assume that what I feel is what she feels, but to allow her to develop her own responses.

Clarice's profound love of her art is allied with her love of teaching and the responsibility she feels toward her students. While Clarice's teaching approach, she would argue, requires her students to have a profound grounding in vocal technical skill, it is her love of the music and artistry that seems to provide Clarice with a particular drive, and which

brings her most joy. The emotional depth and intellectual stimulation Phoebe provides in these lessons appears to nourish Clarice in a way that other students do not.

That is so simple!

Clarice has profound knowledge of the vocal mechanism and she explains her pedagogical strategies in some detail as we review the video excerpts. We discuss many aspects of vocal technique, including chiaroscuro and breath management and she explains her rationale for a series of simple exercises. I ask her about why she makes Phoebe move about during the "ear habits and body habits" excerpt. She explains in depth the rationale for this strategy, which is to stop her from micromanaging. Sometimes it's just better to change the message that the body is getting so there's a chance to experience them in a way that is productive rather than spiralling into a set of self-judgements.

> The major reason, however, would be to encourage a greater, more consistent airflow, on which the beginnings of legato line might be built. She needs to be able to sustain that, as well as balance it with diaphragmatic action, appropriate openness of the pharynx and forward sensation. And that's the point at which it ought to become more simple and less complex.

Clarice explains what Phoebe has learnt in the last few months and her comments expand to include the feeling when embodied understanding occurs.

> We are aiming for a set of sensations that are identifiable for every pitch and every vowel and every phoneme, no matter what consonant gets in the way [she sings through a few]. Then there's that wonderful feeling of having it above the top teeth sensation. And then you go "and that is SO simple!" Why was I causing myself all that trouble! Singers can 'find' that sensation and 'lose' it often before it is truly embodied. When it's there it feels like such a beautiful flow of air, like a tube. It almost feels as if you are singing with straight tone. But in fact the vibrato is there, it's just that you're not particularly conscious of it. It looks after itself and that's the best kind of vibrato.

> Sometimes I take students outside this door, and if nobody is there I ask them to run down the corridor and FEEL that flow of air and sing at the same time, to feel the whoosh of the forward of the body, of the air, of the sense of the harmonic tension then resolving, of the point of textual issues that affect the sense of phrase. It's a whole body experience.

Clarice's detailed explanation reveals how classical singing is a complex, hard to manage series of physical, mental and artistic processes before it becomes easy. I am

reminded of an audio recording of Dame Joan Sutherland and Marilyn Horne discussing how they sing opera, with Dame Joan declaring that once one has breathed, supported then projected the sound on the hard palate, "it is easy!" The audience laughs. It is easy only after the co-ordinations are mastered, precisely Clarice's point.

Miss Nice, Miss Nice, Miss Nice, Miss Nice

Clarice explains that the more experience she has teaching the more remarkable it is just how different students are, and that intellectual ability is different to body ability. Clarice recounts a story about a tenor who after three years of lessons is only now beginning to trust her judgement, because of what she perceives is his reasonable desire for independence. She confesses, smiling ruefully,

> I have to laugh at myself–for all my conviction about enablement–because I have to impose myself on someone… where I need to say, "you *have* to do this. If we are going to work together, you have to trust me on this, and it will be hard, and you will have to be patient, you will have to be brave, but the quicker you do that the quicker we will get through it". When I began teaching, I never envisaged this kind of imposition of my convictions on student singers.

> But at this stage of my work, I sometimes think, you know what, this person depends on me for what they need to hear, and I hope I do it respectfully. But I have learned to insist, I guess, and I've learned that being Miss Nice, Miss Nice, Miss Nice, Miss Nice doesn't always deliver for them what they actually need to hear.

At the same time she acknowledges that occasionally students do not respond as expected to a direction, and that it causes her some distress when misunderstandings occur.

> I find it very upsetting. It sends ME home with a knot in my stomach until I see them next time and we do better. It's hard. You have to have a bit of courage of your convictions sometimes. And be damned sure you keep reassessing your convictions, what's more, instead of saying, "you can't do it, what I've given you to do".

Clarice points out that even while she trusts her judgement, it's always important to keep learning, to assess one's approach, understanding and capacity to teach. She reminds me that we singing teachers must keep re-assessing our convictions around the needs of the individual. It's our job to find multiple ways to help people.

Little courageous decisions

Clarice asks if I have seen the movie The Black Swan, confessing she hated it, because she felt it makes another generation think artistry and art is as it was negatively depicted on screen. She explains her perception of the artistic process.

> For me the artistic process is making courageous decisions, little courageous decisions every minute that you are working. And saying, "okay, this can be better, this can be better and this can be better and I'm going to do it, I'm going to do my best to do it, and I forgive myself if I don't do it and I'm going to get up next morning and try all over again. And I'm going to go along and be criticised and take in what I need to change". You know, someone said to me this week, "what do you do in your work?" and I said, "I sit in a chair all day and criticise people!" Of course, that's not entirely true, because I know I give them an enormous amount of positive reinforcement and encouragement.

Clarice's concept suggests there are two parts to the artistic process: the internal assessment of one's progress, and external criticism or feedback by others. The belief in oneself and one's inner judgement must be able to withstand such external critique, even as the critique is designed to bring about positive change. Her role as the external critic is one she takes very seriously.

This kind of teaching

After teaching Clarice often goes home and sleeps before dinner, but she explains it is the high intensity of the teaching process that causes her fatigue.

> Hmm, it's an adrenalin drop thing, I think. I think there's something about the process of this kind of teaching for me, that immediately engages a relatively high energy of being, and when you stay in that state, sometimes out of determination rather than sheer physical readiness, it's tiring by the end of the day. If I were not finding that energy I would be a different teacher.

Clarice tells me she teaches six days a week, frequently eight or nine hours a day. She says, rather tiredly and at the end of a long interview and even longer day,

> I sometimes teach five hours straight, reasonably frequently, I must say. Kids bring me coffee sometimes. They know I like coffee and I drink terrible coffee more often than I should. I'm trying to educate them not to bring chocolate, and try to look happy at them for bringing me chocolate! One of my students actually brings me lasagne or some kind of veggie dish, because she thinks I don't eat lunch otherwise, and she's right! Homemade, and it's very good! I teach her without fee, so, what the heck.

Her admission about teaching a student for free underlines the care she feels for her students and the sacrifices she is willing to make to ensure they have a positive learning experience, but it also reveals the reciprocal nature of her relationships with her students, who appear to care for her as much as she does for them. As she comments, it seems like a healthy arrangement for us both!

The art of surviving while you wait

As she stated in her first interview, Clarice believes her role as singing teacher is enablement. As I wind up the interview, she explains this further, revealing her strongly held beliefs about teaching, singing, and the act of becoming an opera singer.

It comes down to this. I feel an obligation to get someone to the stage where they can figure out what they're going to do with their singing lives, what they will be *able* to do with their lives, and that's one group of people. The next group of people are people who are so close to their professional ambitions you can see, smell, taste it! And you just have to keep them going, keep them growing, support them while they deal with their frustrations. I've had fourteen or fifteen people in the last six years go into full time work, and that is not achieved without sheer bloody-minded tenacity on their part.

It's the art of surviving while you wait. It's the art of continuing to find your determination and your confidence and your courage every day, enough to get up and do it all over again. And to do it better next time. And I expend a lot of energy on those singers, because I feel so strongly for them, because I know what it's like to be in that world, and I can see it, it's screamingly obvious. And the larger part of my studio is now those singers, and they're wonderful to work with, as you can imagine, and some of them sing so well already. They're right on the edge.

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In the intervening years since the last interview took place I have learned Clarice still teaches Phoebe, whose career is developing well since graduation.

Phoebe, now twenty-two, is regularly performing and travelling overseas for self-directed study. She was the recipient of a rather large award and has received glowing reviews for her performances. She is developing a portfolio of high profile performance opportunities that would look good for someone several years older. I have heard her sing and her voice is as rich and beautiful as ever, if naturally more mature and settled. She

recently wrote me an email that outlined her current activities but which also reveals her self-directed, inquiring and reflexive approach to her education and formation of self:

"I am currently overseas studying languages intensively, and investigating Young Artist and Opera School programmes. I am seeking out the next steps in the journey, as well as learning as much as I possibly can! It is going incredibly well, as I am enjoying developing what I consider to be vital skills in learning languages, as well as developing my vocal and musical craft by working with teachers and coaches over here. It is also incredible to be living in these artistic and musical hubs, and growing as a musician and person every single day. I feel as though I am enriching the fabric of my artistry, as well as simply of my life. That really excites me. It has always been important to me that I am a centred and rich human being as much as I am a "singer". I feel that this self-directed time overseas is a big part of solidifying that for me."

Clarice is increasing her research responsibilities and performing more frequently than she did at the time of the last interview, although it is based on research outputs, as she reported by email: "I have some responsibility for performance research, and over the last two years have done quite a bit of performing–related to research, of course. An orchestral concert just completed, and a new song cycle coming up". I imagine a gently ironic tone as she writes this.

But it is this next comment that reveals her deep, joyful connection to music, teaching and her singing students: "I still enjoy the teaching and have a great bunch of kids, who just sang for my birthday an impromptu four part harmony of some favourite hymns of mine. Of course I wept, much to their satisfaction."

Of course she did.

Notes on the narrative.
Chapter Seven provides a discussion on the findings of the narrative account above and links them to the theoretical framework outlined in the literature review.

Chapter Seven. Discussion

In this chapter I discuss the findings of the narrative accounts. Each case study narrative account is separately analysed using case study analysis methods through the two research questions:

1. What are participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons?
2. How do participant values and beliefs inform their practices?

As outlined in Chapter Three, case study analysis aggregates categories and themes through naturalistic generalizations (Creswell, 2007). As Stake notes of case study research, "we want to appreciate the uniqueness and complexity of it, its embeddedness and interactions with its contexts" (1995, p. 16). Nevertheless, categorization of the findings across cases into categories is useful for broader meanings to be explored within the phenomenon of tertiary classical singing teaching and learning. As Riessman notes, "theorizing across a number of cases by identifying common thematic elements across research participants, the events they report, and the actions they take is an established tradition" (2008, p. 74).

Using the narrative accounts and employing categorical aggregation and naturalistic generalisations (Creswell, 2007), three main characteristics are analysed in the discussion chapter under pedagogy, environment, and relationship, which were informed by cultural psychology theories and the literature review. Each case possesses intrinsic characteristics; therefore, each case study analysis focuses on that particular characteristic.

Then, in order to clearly delineate the findings, the analysis is divided into teacher and student, and explored under two headers: Values and Beliefs, and Practices, which are linked to the research questions. Five themes emerged: identity, dispositions and attributes, pedagogy, relationality, and community. These five themes were embedded within the analysis of each participant and across all three cases. Literature and research on these three characteristics and the five themes were explored in the literature review, and contextualised within a historical exploration of singing teaching and learning values, beliefs and practices from the European medieval guilds to current times.

At the end of each case study analysis there is a final commentary that refocuses attention onto the tacit, encultured practices that informed the pedagogical and interpersonal relationship between teacher and student.

By investigating the research questions within this framework I demonstrate that teacher values and beliefs are informed by their experiences in singing, their pedagogical knowledge, and their experiences in the conservatoire work environment. I describe the tacit enculturation processes as the teachers prepare students for the dispositions and attributes needed for a career in the classical singing profession. I discuss how the students in the study are likewise informed by their singing experiences and how they perceive the pedagogical and relational approaches of their teachers within the conservatoire. As explored in the literature review, these findings are discussed within the conceptual framework of cultural psychology.

Case Study One. A real voice

In this analysis I focus on Deborah's pedagogical approach. I explore how her dispositions and attributes as a performer and participant of the culture have shaped her approach to student Jennifer's learning. Jennifer's transformation from novice to professional singer is examined through the lens of her experiences at her institution with both her teacher and the community. For Jennifer I examine the processes of enculturation, the development of classical singer dispositions and attributes and how the learning and teaching relationship with Deborah mediates these.

Deborah

Values and Beliefs

Deborah's dual roles as performer and teacher ensure her social, relational and collective identities as teacher-performer are maintained. This gives her a legitimate identity in the artistic practice of singing, elevating her value to the student and staff body through perceptions of expertise and eminence and ongoing participation in the field (Hatano and Oura, 2001). Given that teachers usually come from a performance background (Callaghan, 2000, Welch et al, 2005, Gaunt, 2008), this dual role of performer-teacher is crucial to Deborah's expression of the social self within and outside the conservatoire: the individual, the relational and the collective (Brewer & Yuki, 2007), her roles and sense of belonging within this culture.

Deborah views her teaching and performing activities as part of a continuum, perceiving teaching informs performing and vice versa, sustaining her belief that teaching and singing require ongoing learning and reflection (Bennett, 2008, Schön, 1983). She comments, "If you're a performer that knows how to reflect on your craft and is interested in the building blocks, then you'll be interested in the building blocks for your teaching, because you understand the importance of them".

Accordingly she regularly attends conferences and maintains her own practice as she feels it informs her learning and teaching approach. Prior to beginning teaching she went to wet-labs and observed the teaching of others, but subsequently learned on the job. This finding is at odds with research indicating singers come to teaching without any training and teach as they themselves were taught (Gaunt, 2008, Davidson and Jordan, 2007, Carey & Grant, 2014). For Deborah, the "opportunity to watch my other colleagues, or learn from them a little bit" informed her practice, and, as she explains, by "doing a lot of my own singing and popping back and forth to Kathryn and going to conferences and trying to develop a craft", her inquiring nature enabled her to develop her pedagogical approach. Her curiosity was based partly on the experience of working in Europe with American singers

who had better technique, but also realising her own technique was inadequate to sustain a long-term international career. Her vocal health crisis fuelled her desire to be a teacher who understood the fundamentals of vocal technique: "I teach in a reaction to the way I was taught, in a bid to give students those elements that were not offered to me". Callaghan, Emmons and Popeil (2012) and Welch et al (2005), note the difficulty singing teachers with limited pedagogical training have of providing students with the comprehensive instruction required to ensure coverage of all "key features of performance" (Welch et al, 2005, p. 226).

While Deborah believes that one-to-one teaching provides efficiency of learning to the students, it's dependent on effective transmission of good pedagogy. Consequently, most of Deborah's approach is concerned with preparing singers for a potentially long career through development of a solid vocal technical foundation: "I'd rather have one you put together a bit. I find that a really interesting process, and very rewarding. And I think they make better singers in the long run, because they've had to do it that way." The implication here seems to be that those singers with naturally occurring vocal technique may suffer in the long run because they lack the foundational technical knowledge to fix their voice should they have vocal health problems. This belief is supported by Chapman's claim that singers need to have knowledge about their voice and how it functions under a range of conditions so that they can self-diagnose and self-correct when away from their "supporting home team of coach, teacher, therapist and so on" (2006, p. 248). This also suggests Deborah promotes autonomy and independence in her students, which is supported by findings from Presland (2005), Purser (2005), Miller (1996) Blades-Zeller (2003) and others, but which both the Gaunt (2011) and Johansson (2012) studies found was lacking in interactions between students and teachers.

Deborah believes she is inculcating her own students into a set of dispositions and attributes that will prepare her students for the profession, which includes preparedness, preparation and respect for the teaching and learning space–the values, dispositions and attributes she was taught in her education and in her working life. Likewise, Blades-Zeller's study on American singing teachers showed similar findings, where attributes related to personality and personal development showed the need for professionalism, punctuality, preparation, persistence, discipline and mental toughness, amongst many other attributes (2003, p. 167). Deborah talks about how the one-to-one singing lesson is about working and compartmentalising emotional issues: "It's a very important skill, because you can't work professionally if it's all geared to your emotional state…Because they only get one lesson a week, they understand that they need to prepare and to come in with a sense of working that way."

This approach was informed in part by lessons with a teacher who valued efficiency and professionalism in the teaching studio. Deborah's own time-efficient approach she claims is modelled directly on this teaching. However, the available literature on singers and

training indicates that a singer's emotional state often determines the functionality of the singing voice (Mason, 2000; Thurman & Welch, 2000; Welch, 2005; Chapman, 2006), therefore her belief may be at odds with the literature, nevertheless she claims the interpersonal relationship between student and teacher can be mediated by the networks she has set up to manage various physical and psychological issues, as she believes "it's really important to recognise your own professional scope". Nevertheless, Deborah believes her role in the one-to-one classical singing lesson is vital for the student's development and that "each student, each one's different. I mean the basics are there but you've got to be aware of how they learn, and what they can cope with", necessitating a personalised approach to each student. This is mirrored in the research, particularly in Carey and Grant's study, in which their participants viewed "the one-to-one method as invaluable, even irreplaceable, for its ability to respond to the individual, its customisable nature, and its pedagogical effectiveness" (2014, p. 11).

Deborah's cultural values were shaped in part by her previous teachers but also by the conservatoire environment in which her learning took place. However, it seems clear that she has thought reflexively about the efficacy of such experiences, which has informed her teaching as she is not prepared to follow unthinkingly the "teach as you were taught" maxim that characterises the classic master apprentice learning and teaching approach: "We're slowly breaking through bit by bit, the cycle of 'teaching as you were taught', and the same omissions in the knowledge being perpetuated… that is *it*, I think we *are* teaching as a *response* to the way that we were taught".

Deborah believes she is but one part of a singer's education and that she would like to share the learning and teaching of her students if it were possible, but that her students might become confused by different pedagogical approaches and artistic values and thus this should not occur until later in their education. As a result she only "gives them a sprinkling, because they have to be at a stage where they won't abandon their other stuff and go".

She nevertheless believes that learning to take direction from a variety of people is imperative for students wishing to build a career in opera, as she explains, "a professional singer needs to take instruction and a variety of ideas from a variety of people". She also perceives the value of developing professional networks and that her teaching practice is complemented by a network of professionals, taking an holistic approach to singing teaching and learning. Team teaching only five years ago was still considered an unusual process within a conservatoire, as discussed by Gaunt (2008), although Carey and Grant's more recent study reported "strong support for working collaboratively with colleagues, to enhance and broaden both their own and their students' experiences of one-to-one" (2014, p. 11).

Deborah, however, perceives she and her colleagues do not collaborate nearly as effectively as she would like, perpetuating the isolation felt by one-to-one instrumental and vocal teachers (Gaunt, 2008, Davidson & Jordan, 2007). Partly, she is concerned the approaches she is taking with the student to develop their voices may be undermined by

alternative artistic and pedagogical viewpoints. This belief is a reminder that the one-to-one approach is indeed dependent on the teacher's unique aesthetic values that drive the pedagogical approach, and indeed, the uniqueness of the setting itself.

Deborah is concerned that at her current institution, assessment requirements seem to shoehorn student development into a rigid, prescriptive framework over the duration of the degree, not allowing for the vagaries of vocal and human development (Chapman, 2006). She also perceives students in today's conservatoire do not work nearly as hard or for as many hours as she did in her undergraduate degree, suggesting the institution has cut courses and reduced hours, which may be due in part to financial constraints. This may have an impact on how she teaches her students.

Deborah believes in the concept of a "real voice" and that to help build it makes her job rewarding, supported by Blades-Zeller (2003), who found in auditions singing teachers tend to listen for a natural voice quality, "freedom and vitality" (p. 103) in the singing voice, "beauty of quality and expressiveness" (ibid). Teachers in her study believed that if a student possesses these qualities, amongst a range of other musical and personal qualities, then technical proficiency can be developed.

Practices

Planning and Tools

Deborah usually begins lessons by warming up the voice and by listening to and diagnosing the student's vocal issues. She continues the lesson by working on repertoire, but also intersperses the lesson with discussion of concepts and goals. In part she is guided by the needs of the student on the day but with a long-term goal in mind. This goal setting is mirrored in the research by Gaunt (2008, 2009, 2011), and Carey & Grant (2014), however it is at odds with Karlsson and Juslin's 2008 study, which found that teachers rarely pre-plan lessons, instead they relied on repertoire to structure lessons. Noting that there are potential cultural differences between the institutions studied, this discrepancy may also reflect that studio teachers need to ensure lessons are customised to the student needs on the day.

Deborah regularly keeps notes on the student and with their input helps plan their short-term and even long-term goals. This finding is supported by Blades-Zeller (2003, pp. 110–137), who found that expert singing teachers tend to plan goals with their students and keep extensive notes.

Deborah's tools include piano and music. There is little evidence she uses recording devices in the studio but her student was advised to listen to a new aria, suggesting Deborah encourages the use of recordings for study (Zhukov, 2004).

Pedagogical strategies

Deborah employs a "motor-learning" approach (Bergan, 2010; Nisbet, 2010; Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014), which in simple terms is learning singing through developing physical awareness and sensory perception of the body functions in singing. She employs techniques recently codified in singing pedagogy including notions of primal sound (Chapman, 2006) and accent method (Morris, in Chapman, 2006) to manage breath support.

Consistent use of these pedagogical techniques was evident throughout the lesson series, and in one excerpt it is possible to see the physicalisation of an artistic concept through a motor-sensory portamento exercise (described in Chapter Four under the section "Building the professional singer"). The language she employs with Jennifer is in shorthand, which nevertheless can be perceived by an experienced viewer as having a clear and definable result on the sound quality of the student's voice. The imagery she employs is always couched in physical terms (Chapman, 2006), including "honest vowels", "smile pucker", "energy in the breath", "splat", and extensive explanations of how tongue shapes colour the vowel including "feeling as if those sides are heading for your upper molars".

She dislikes modelling as a pedagogical technique as she feels it is limited and it is evident in the lessons the student does not require it. Deborah rarely sings and then only to explain an exercise, musical phrase or concept that would take too long to explain in words. This is at odds with the usual approach, where imitation and modelling is a typical pedagogical strategy (Mason, 2000; Welch et al, 2005; Callaghan, 2000; Mitchell, 2014; Karlsson & Juslin, 2008; Chapman, 2006). Nevertheless Deborah uses modelling to illustrate an aural concept if certain students don't respond to other strategies, "particularly if it's an aesthetic, they're not going to be able to have heard it and they can't respond to it".

She employs gestures to illustrate internal physical sensations or artistic concepts and also manipulates Jennifer's frame at times when she wishes Jennifer to connect better with her breath and support. This use of gesture and external manipulation of the physical frame as a pedagogical strategy is supported by Blades-Zeller (2003), Welch et al (2005), Chapman (2006), Callaghan, Emmons and Popeil (2012), where research suggests teachers actively make use of sensory and proprioceptive feedback models to assist with vocal development.

Teaching mode

Her teaching style is both transmissive and transformational (Carey& Grant, 2014), given the craft-discipline of singing that in part requires a highly instructional approach designed to build the voice coupled with immediate, positive feedback designed to provide affirmation of the student's capacity to effect the appropriate changes in the vocal apparatus. In this instance the Knowledge of Results Feedback loop (Welch, Howard, Himonides et al, 2005) is well in evidence and the student shows good take-up of instruction through this approach.

The lessons range from purely instructional pedagogy coupled with immediate feedback for vocal exercises that commonly take place at the start of the lesson, to mentor-like sessions where long conversations take place and advice is administered to the student throughout the remainder of the lesson.

Deborah is quite business-like in her approach at the start of each lesson, getting straight to the exercises, but later in the lesson her demeanour becomes more relaxed. Her feedback is invariably immediate and very positive in its cast, enabling the student to seek alternative means of vocal production within prescriptive voice-building techniques. She asks the student to articulate concepts and make reflexive judgements about her voice, although she does not ask the student to do this in the middle of a singing exercise (Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014, Nisbet, 2010).

In later lessons she consistently works in a mentor-mentee mode, although she also seems to take this approach after the motor-learned basics of vocal technique have been mastered (Carey & Grant, 2014).

Jennifer

Values and Beliefs

Jennifer perceives that her "real voice" was one developed over time with her teacher's help and feedback. She believes that her voice prior to coming to the institution was not real–it was a fake voice that she had developed through imitation of other artists (Miller, 1996) and that her singing lessons have helped her strip that away. She perceives that certain voices are more beautiful than others and that singers have to learn to come to terms with their voice. This belief relates to perceptions about one's worth in the community, through a lens of "my voice is myself" (Oakland, 2014, O'Bryan, in press).

She perceives that she identified as a singer prior to entering the Con but that her vocal identity (Fach) had to change over time, which caused her to rethink her singer identity. Given that she has had to change repertoire as well, this has caused her to rethink her identity in music (Hargreaves, Miell & McDonald, 2002). It also impacted on her perception of her body and the roles she wished to play (O'Bryan, in press). She sees herself as an opera singer and can envisage her place in the community.

Despite not yet being a professional, Jennifer describes the opera profession as lonely and that you have to be driven to succeed in the business. She believes that to prepare for a career in opera one must be prepared to do almost anything to get there. She talks in detail about the appearance-based hiring approach of some German houses and wonders if her weight would affect her prospects. She talks about travelling and the potential impact on her personal life and discusses how the life of an opera singer would be a lonely one because of the competition from peers. Given that she has not yet experienced this, it appears she is

relying on information gleaned from other sources to make this assessment, or has used the conservatoire experiences where after being awarded a major role she was treated poorly by her peers, to make judgements about her future working life. Certainly biographies by Fleming (2005) and others emphasise the loneliness of the profession. In a 2008 Talking Heads interview with Peter Thompson (Cooper, 2008), Wagnerian Soprano Lisa Gasteen discussed the difficulty of working as a touring singer and the loss over time of her sense of place and belonging. Teachers in the Blades-Zeller study (2003) believe singers need to possess a range of attributes including persistence, determination and mettle to succeed in the profession.

Jennifer feels strongly that her teacher is her number one supporter and that it is the job of the teacher to create confidence in the student. She believes that while her teacher is not a mother figure, she is very supportive of her students and goes out of her way to provide them with support and care. She is able to discuss personal matters with her teacher and she believes they share positive rapport (Clemmons, 2007; Nerland & Hanken, 2004; Gaunt, 2008; Carey & Grant, 2014). Jennifer perceived her teacher's approach to teaching was flexible and geared to the needs of the student and that Deborah's own approach to teaching and learning was one of ongoing development, which therefore informed the teacher's pedagogy. Jennifer perceives this as positive, and Jennifer's subsequent learning may be shaped by her teacher's inquiring disposition and attributes with regard to singing education.

Jennifer learned to trust her teacher's expertise over time, as she acknowledges her teacher required her think about her voice in a different way, which caused her some distress. For vocal development trust is acknowledged by all researchers in singing education as a crucial element in the learning and teaching relationship in order to effect positive change in what is the student's primary tool of communication–the voice. The voice is acknowledged as having an intrinsic connection to self (Thurman & Welch, 2000; Welch, 2005; Chapman, 2006; Callaghan, 2010) and therefore care must be taken with the student's psychology that criticism of the voice is not disparagement of the person (Fleming, 2005; O'Bryan, 2010, O'Bryan, in press).

Jennifer talked in both positive and negative terms about her experiences at her institution. She felt at times both peers and staff members harassed or undermined her but that there were several people supporting her work. Her conservatoire experiences parallel the research by Kingsbury (1988), Perkins (2012), Davies (2004) and others, who acknowledge the highly competitive nature of these elite institutions. Throughout the study the student progressed well and took part in competitions and gained major roles in the student operas. However, the competitive environment at her institution seemed to mirror that of the profession and Jennifer worried at the end about what this would mean as she transitioned into the profession (Creech, Papageorgi et al, 2008; Ibarra, 1999).

Practices

Jennifer perceived that while other teachers identified and discussed the same problems, the language she shared with her teacher was the best one for her, mirroring the opinion of Fleming (2005) and other research indicating good communication between teacher and student is vital for successful student learning (Welch, Howard, Himonides, et al, 2005; Callaghan, 2010). Her uptake of information provided by Deborah is evident in that she is able to clearly articulate her understanding of vocal concepts. In this student the Knowledge of Results Feedback loop (Welch, Howard, Himonides et al, 2005) has been successfully administered and mastery of vocal concepts is evident through the student's various successes.

Jennifer believed the motor-learning approach (Bergan, 2010; Nisbet, 2010; Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014) was the best way for her to develop solid vocal technique and with appropriate feedback from her teacher was able to apply it during home practice, which was the ultimate goal of her teacher. It is uncertain whether Jennifer knew precisely what the method was called, however, it seems she was able to pinpoint particular aspects of the method that were relevant to her own circumstances surrounding her weight loss, through such comments as: "Deborah and I think I'm actually singing better, more efficiently…The support–because there's not bits that used to be there–is totally different". From this comment it appears Deborah's teaching approach is one of collaboration and negotiation. Jennifer was able to comment in detail on the technique required to stabilise her technique after she had lost weight, suggesting she had become autonomous and independent in her ability to diagnose her vocal and technical proficiency.

However, Jennifer's comment: "Deborah says she can't trust me just yet, to go out on my own and be self-sufficient and fix things on the run", suggests that Deborah perceives more time is still needed for Jennifer to reach complete autonomy. From this comment it seems Deborah has an innate sense of when it is appropriate to let go of the student, and that Jennifer understands this, too. It suggests the pedagogical relationship is deeply trusting and collaborative, and that Deborah is attuned to Jennifer's needs.

Prior to her place in the institution Jennifer developed her craft through self-directed learning, showing strong intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1986, 2000) towards her goal. Despite many setbacks she has remained focussed and committed to her vocal development. She currently practices more than 2 hours per day, which for advanced singing training is typical, although many teachers in the Blades-Zeller (2003) study recommended breaking this up into smaller time segments. Another activity that shows Jennifer's commitment is her exercise regime and subsequent weight loss, which indicates a highly motivated and goal-focussed student. Her commitment to her physical health shows a realisation of the body as both housing for the voice and an external frame by which characters and roles can be more

accurately depicted, which complements comments made by both Miller (1986) and Terracini (McAlister, 2011) about the need for singers to be fit, healthy and attractive.

Comment

The pedagogical relationship between Deborah and her student Jennifer indicates a close, trusting one, in which a successful outcome in the craft of classical singing is the goal. Jennifer's impressive vocal development and achievements in competitions, auditions and opera roles suggests she has effectively navigated her way through her undergraduate experience and is ready to take on the challenges of the profession. Deborah has played a significant role in Jennifer's development as a saleable commodity. As Deborah comments of Jennifer's voice prior to her entering the institution, "if she continued to sing the way that she was singing then it wouldn't have been such a usable package. Because it was really unbalanced, it had fast vibrato and tuning issues, so it has been a case for her of building technique, but of course having an instrument to begin with is a huge advantage". For Deborah, her teaching approach indicates new ways of teaching within an old model of one-to-one singing lessons. Her pedagogical approach is informed by ongoing research, while her own learning experiences have informed the attributes and dispositions she wishes her students to develop.

In Deborah and Jennifer's case the traditional master/ apprentice tradition includes the whole environment and culture of the conservatoire. The student has become an apprentice of the whole environment, not just a single teacher. It might be suggested that the environment in which Deborah is functioning allows ongoing learning and values the development of their teachers (Burland & Davidson, 2004), and that the conservatoire itself is changing with the times. It might be argued, too, that Deborah is fostering a more collaborative and transparent learning and teaching environment by maintaining an open rehearsal room during her own coaching sessions (Carey & Grant, 2014) and by collaborating with a network of professionals to ensure her students are provided with a range of learning opportunities. The institution in which student learning takes place is very important; as it supports Jennifer's one-to-one singing training through a range of other learning opportunities, including working with an accompanist, master classes and significant performances. While the institution was not the main focus of this discussion, it seems apparent that much of the activities mentioned in the narrative support a craft-based model of education. As indicated in the literature review, modern apprenticeship in music includes the institution, its people and the socio-cultural interactions within. Without the institutional values evident in its activities I wonder whether Deborah would be able to foster in her students the dispositions and attributes she considers vital for a career in classical singing.

As Deborah herself insists, she is just one of a number of people who will influence a singer's professional life, however, it seems that she is one of the important influences. Without a secure vocal technique, Jennifer would be unlikely to succeed in the profession.

Case Study Two. A way forward

The institutional environment plays a major role in this case study and I examine how its role and values affects the study participants. I examine how Mark's approach to pedagogy has been in part shaped by the institution and its students, and how this approach then impacts on student learning and the eventual outcome of this case study. I discuss Vanessa's problems with self-esteem and self-efficacy and the difficulty she had of voicing her concerns to the teacher, and I investigate why the learning and teaching relationship was ultimately unsuccessful.

Mark

Values and Beliefs

Mark is, like the other two teachers in the study, both performer and teacher, although Mark's performing is his main employment at this point in his career. Mark views his teaching as a necessary but rewarding balance for his performing and research activities. For this teacher, teaching makes his life tick and teaching is one of several "jobs" that make up his musician identity (Bennett, 2008; Triantafyllaki, 2010). He believes singing teachers ought to have performance experience in order to know how the stage experience affects performance practice, which is a belief common to all three teachers in the study, this being supported throughout the literature on singing teaching (Miller, 1986; Callaghan, 2000; Blades-Zeller, 2003; Schindler, 2010; O'Bryan & Harrison, 2014). As he says, "you can never successfully call yourself a singer, or you can never call yourself a successful singer unless you've actually tested yourself on stage in front of an audience in various capacities".

Mark does not see his performance job affecting his role or sense of belonging within the conservatoire. Instead, he claims his expertise in the field is not respected. Indeed, he feels he is not a valued member of the institution, saying, "they place no–seemingly–no value on what I do". The culture in which he was educated and the current culture in which he works might be characterised by similar learning and teaching activities, surrounds, personnel and intended outcomes, but for Mark the lack of respect toward his art form is an attack on his social identity, values and beliefs. This impacts on his self-worth and sense of institutional belonging (Brewer & Yuki, 2007). The institutional apathy towards his art has affected the hours he teaches, from a full-time contract position down to a casual position. The institution has undergone significant personnel changes since Mark started with them, and he claims the loss of corporate knowledge and shifting priorities within the undergraduate program does not bode well for graduate outcomes. The changes within the institution are a step too far from what he feels are pre-requisites for the creation of a professional musician. Primarily, he sees poor student quality hampering potential musical excellence in graduates. He believes that by accepting poor quality students the traditional–and usually taken-for-granted–

emphasis on excellence in music making that he felt characterised the previous administration cannot be maintained.

He also considers students are getting a much poorer quality education through the reduction of programs for classical singers. He believes that by removing or reducing programs meant to enhance student learning, students will not develop the necessary knowledge or craft discipline to succeed in the music profession. He believes the institutional culture has lost its connection to traditional values, jarring with his beliefs about his chosen art form. He believes that without a connection to historical traditions students will not learn the value of their place in musical history.

The institutional culture he describes also removes autonomy from the teacher, causing him to teach in a way that doesn't foster independence in the student. He believes he has to work mostly on musicianship with the students so that they might more accurately reproduce the music in performance, rather than working on vocal technique. This is explained further in the section on his pedagogical approaches.

Mark talks about his love of music that he felt from an early age, which was encouraged by his family, as is commonly found in the research regarding professional musicians' early musical experiences (McPherson, 2009; Creech, 2009). He believes he could always sing and that it came easily to him even though his focus, commitment and persistence was not found until his post-graduate studies. His experience in his own undergraduate degree appears positive although it appears to share many of the characteristics of the regional conservatoire experience of his current institution. He talks in glowing terms about his postgraduate experience at the City conservatorium and about the respect shown him by his teachers and lecturers.

In his professional performing life Mark talks about the requirement for independent learning and thick skin needed in order to survive in the business, and that singers need to make their own success through networks, hard work and perseverance, which is mirrored in anecdotal comments made by Necula's (2009) participants and by the teachers in the Blades-Zeller (2003) study. He believes he is hard working and committed and bemoans that many of his students seem not to hold similar values. He wishes to inculcate his students into being self-sufficient and self-directed but is unable to do this because he feels the institution in which he works does not allow him to set up the types of practices to enable these dispositions. He thus feels his values cannot be promulgated in his current working environment and, as a result, students are not learning the values of hard work, self-direction and perseverance.

Mark talks about the students' need for a safe, trusting space where they may work away from peer pressure and criticism, which is indicated in the research (Chapman, 2006; Clemmons, 2006, 2007; Nerland & Hanken, 2008; Carey & Grant, 2014). He values

consideration for the student and believes respect in the studio should be reciprocal. He believes that the critical feedback he gives is to empower student to allow mistakes to occur, as he perceives analysis of mistakes to be crucial in the singers' learning process. He believes the learning and teaching relationship requires trust, as he asserts that without trust comes constriction and reluctance to try something new (Mason, 2000; Thurman & Welch, 2000; Welch, 2005; Chapman, 2006).

He perceives that singers, having the most deeply personal form of self-expression through embodied sound, take longer to develop than instrumentalists, and that they also have personal issues that may impact on their capacity to learn. This is also indicated in the research by Thurman and Welch (2000), Chapman (2006), O'Bryan (2010, in press), Clemmons (2006, 2007), each of which suggest a learning and teaching relationship built on trust, reciprocity, relatedness and empathy are vital for successful singing student outcomes.

Practices

Mark took an Estill course (http://www.estillvoice.com/) in voice physiology, and also has a number of textbooks that have helped further inform his knowledge of physiology. His knowledge of the vocal mechanism seems secure and profound. His application of specific pedagogical techniques, however, is difficult to ascertain, which is explained further below.

Planning and tools

Mark provides all his students with an information kit at the beginning of the year and takes brief notes of each student, which is mirrored in the research by Blades-Zeller (2003), who found that expert teachers similarly take notes and prepare students for the year ahead. He regularly uses the piano, showing generally robust skill on the instrument, and suggests his students record their lessons, although he admits his student in the case study rarely did so. Even when his student Vanessa is encouraged to make use of current technologies, she may not always take advantage of them, which suggests she may be aware of and unwilling to face personal fears about her voice.

Pedagogical Strategies

Mark prefers not to warm up his students but he finds that he frequently has to as he perceives they lack the motivation to come in prepared. He works on technique through repertoire, because he perceives that there is little time in the lesson for dedicated time for technique work. This is markedly different from the other teachers in the study, who make a point of working specifically on vocal techniques prior to developing skills through repertoire. This is also at odds with the teachers in Blades-Zeller's findings (2003). This

finding suggests Mark does not work specifically on voice building techniques with this student, which may have repercussions for student outcomes. It may also be a result of the poor motivation of the student in the study, whose significant deficiencies in musicianship may have contributed to her lack of development in singing technique.

Mark does not appear to consistently work on voice-building vocal techniques with his student participant although this may well happen with other students, however, given his practice of going straight into singing repertoire in the lessons, it might be assumed that he believes voice building is a by-product of singing the repertoire, not vice versa.

While Mark demonstrates vocal concepts in his lessons it is more as a reminder of the concept, not as an aural model.

His teaching approach in the videoed lessons seems purely instructional, perhaps because of the low ability, confidence and motivation of the student. He is unable to impart any concepts relating to artistry or musicality during the videoed lesson series. The lessons mainly deal with note learning each song or exercise. The Knowledge of Results feedback loop (Welch, Himonides, Howard et al, 2005) necessary to effect change in the student is not well in evidence in the lessons, as Vanessa is unable to manage the simplest techniques, including matching pitch securely or sustaining a note. Nevertheless attempts at scaffolding are evident and constructive feedback of the student's work is immediate.

Teaching mode

While he perceives his role as teacher to be one of great responsibility Mark is keen to enable self-regulation in his students, hence, his lessons begin with him asking for their input about what happened throughout the week prior, putting the impetus back on them to be self-determining. All the same, he perceives his students lack the responsibility or capacity to plan. This suggests Mark's approach is unsuccessful with his student Vanessa, who perhaps needs a more formal, structured, and regulated approach to learning, with specific practice strategies and achievement of small goals throughout each week. Nevertheless, Mark states: "I couldn't seem to impress upon her the need to have some kind of structured practice". This suggests the student failed to take responsibility for her learning regardless of the opportunities offered. As Mark also notes, "these people are adults, I'm not forcing them to do anything, I'm putting this information on the table, all students, all singers, have to learn to apply it". For Mark, who values self-regulation and self-motivation, the apparent lack of concern shown by his student must rankle. Nevertheless his teaching mode is gentle and encouraging, and indicates consistent care and concern for the student despite the low level of instruction he must give Vanessa.

Vanessa

Values and beliefs

Like the other singers in the study, Vanessa perceived that she is her instrument. She perceived that although she felt she was a singer prior to coming to uni she also had to go through a journey to become a singer. This might be seen as the development of skills, attributes and dispositions needed for a professional singer identity. She perceived herself to be a singer but not specifically an opera singer, which points to uncertainty about her musical identity (Hargreaves et al, 2002, O'Bryan, in press).

Vanessa perceived that opera is the pinnacle of achievement in music and singing and that it requires perfection and hard work. She claimed to practice 2 hours per day but admits she rarely did so. She showed poor self-confidence and revealed great fear of performing, particularly as she admitted to lack of preparation. This seems to indicate a cycle of poor achievement compounded by performance anxiety and overly difficult music, suggesting that her self-competency and automony was suffering (Deci & Ryan, 2000; O'Bryan, 2010).

She had no firm goals about what she would do once she completed her degree, and despite her suggestion that opera singing requires perfection did not seem to connect her own work with an opera singer identity. She was aware of the "perfection" of opera and perceived that more study–particularly overseas–would be required in order to have a career in singing after attaining her Bachelor's degree. She worked several jobs, leaving little time for study. Goal setting was found by the teachers in the Blades-Zeller (2003) study to be intrinsic to career development in classical singing and without such goals, self-identity and a focussed pathway the teachers perceived there was little possibility of developing a career in this art form. By the end of the study Vanessa had dropped her desire to be an opera singer, which suggests she realised she lacked the voice, aptitude and discipline for classical singing.

Vanessa talked about supportive peers but was aware of her need to be perfect. She felt she had not been supported at the institution during a crisis point, but that her lecturers and peers were helpful at times. She was aware that her peers could be critical, which mirrors the Kingsbury (1988) study findings, and the findings from the more recent Master class studies by Creech, Gaunt, Hallam & Robertson (2009), plus the Long, Creech, Gaunt and Hallam (2014) study, who found that these types of peer performances were not always positive for the participants.

Practices

Pedagogical strategies

Vanessa made the observation that it had taken her a while to get to know her teacher and that it took a while to learn his pedagogical language. She was very aware of her myriad technical flaws and perceived that she was not progressing technically with Mark over the

course of the study. Vanessa discerned that she and Mark struggled to communicate a mutual language. The type of ongoing feedback necessary in singing pedagogy was one that did not work for her. Given her poor preparation, she perceived the feedback to be an attack rather than constructive and critical. Her struggles with feelings of low self-confidence made her unable to cope with the feedback, and she perceived that lessons were something to be survived. This "survival" was not unique to this relationship–it seems Vanessa struggled when she thought her previous teacher had also criticised her or shown disappointment at her lack of home practice. Vanessa's failure to handle critical feedback suggests generally poor self-esteem and low self-efficacy. This might have been enhanced by repertoire selection that she struggled to enjoy, thus placing her singer self-concept in disarray and lowering her self-esteem (Hargreaves, Miell & McDonald, 2002). It may have also impacted on her ability to question Mark's pedagogical choices and to effect change through verbal discussion. Vanessa may have felt disempowered to speak with her teacher due to this low self-esteem and self-efficacy, which is at odds with Mark's desire to promote a safe, trusting space where effective learning could take place.

Vanessa also acknowledged her difficulty in learning repertoire, agreeing that she used the lessons to learn it. She was confounded by why the home practice she had done wasn't enough and seemed to be unaware that the amount of preparation she did for her lessons was not enough for satisfactory progression, which then compounded her low self-confidence.

She described her fear about singing high notes and demonstrated she was afraid of trying particular technical concepts. Vanessa perceived that many of her poor techniques stemmed from habituation and that it was difficult to change them, given that poor preparation compounded her fear of making a mistake. Vanessa felt her teacher focussed too much on the problem and not enough on the solution to vocal flaws. In her lessons with her subsequent teacher she observed her understanding had improved, as she comments: "ok, that's what's happening, I can do this to stop it, and focus on solutions instead of the problem". She also perceived Mark introduced her to concepts she struggled to follow, including singing high notes and learning classical repertoire. As a result, she didn't trust Mark's advice because she rarely followed it. She claimed however that Mark tried to make her laugh and provided a fun, relaxed working environment.

At the end of the semester she had felt that she was nuisance value to Mark and that her lessons were something to be endured. She noted her previous teacher had motivated her to continue working during times of stress and illness and that she had visited her as a young adult, suggesting that the student connected best with an empathetic, familiar teacher from her adolescence, regardless of their teaching ability, and that she had not developed the necessary resilience to pursue this type of singing career.

With her new teacher's different pedagogical approach, however, she perceived there were more opportunities for her to think about solutions to problems rather than the problems themselves. At the end of the study Vanessa was able to identify her lack of coordination between body support and breath control, and was able to demonstrate her understanding of her poor alignment. She was able to demonstrate the straw technique and for what purpose.

Comment

In this ultimately unsuccessful learning and teaching relationship, Vanessa's lack of motivation, lack of responsibility for her learning, and poor home practice habits clearly hindered her capacity to develop fundamental singing skills. Nevertheless, there are other issues that may have impacted on her ability to learn and upon Mark's capacity to teach her.

Vanessa's poor standard and second-attempt mid-year admission suggests she was admitted to make up numbers in the course. This suggests that her music institution was less interested in promoting excellence than might otherwise be expected from a conservatoire traditionally concerned with its development. Mark's knowledge about her poor standard may have then influenced both his opinion of her potential and subsequent approach to her learning.

Mark appears not to have asked Vanessa about her prior musical experience, or her musical preferences, which, if he had done so, might have made her transition from school to university a happier one, by learning about her needs and capacities prior to commencing repertoire work. Mark appears to have given Vanessa repertoire that challenged her beyond her vocal and intellectual capacity or personal taste, although the songs I observed during the lessons were not particularly difficult for a student in second year to manage.

Vanessa's inability to change aspects of her singing technique may have been caused by her inability to deal with criticism and her struggle to reconcile her feelings for the repertoire Mark selected. While she appeared to have a good capacity for self-reflection, she did not appear to be able to use this reflection to promote change in her practice habits, musicianship or vocal technical ability. Vanessa's ongoing habituation of poor vocal habits thus proved very difficult to shift. These issues may have also influenced Mark's pedagogical approach, given that Vanessa rarely made efforts to develop her singing skills or musicianship beyond the confines of the lesson. Certainly Mark was unable to find a pedagogical pathway to help this student do much more than pass her course.

The institution did not seem to support Mark, either in his chosen art form or his position. Mark's worth to the institution seemed devalued, at least in Mark's eyes. This may have accounted for his sense of frustration at the lack of support for the students undertaking classical singing studies. It may also have accounted for his sense of powerlessness to effect change in his students' dispositions and attributes regarding singing practice, self-motivation and self-regulation.

The institution did not seem to support Vanessa particularly well either, as administrative problems seem to have impacted on her capacity to comply with course requirements. It seems that a lacklustre institutional culture in part contributed to Vanessa's poor performance. These include poor administrative practices; allowing low admission standards; lowering the worth of classical singing by removing classes from the classical singers' roster that might have helped singing students learn about vocal styles within an historical context; and removing value and autonomy from the teacher, therefore disabling the teacher's capacity to demand minimum standards of work from Vanessa.

Case Study Three. Little courageous decisions

In this case the focus is primarily on the learning and teaching relationship of teacher Clarice and her student Phoebe, through an exploration of their values and beliefs about what this relationship signifies to them and how this is then mediated through the pedagogical approaches used.

Clarice

Values and Beliefs

Clarice views singing teaching as a vocation and one for which she has specifically trained, partly because she perceived her own vocal education did not adequately prepare her for the rigors of a performance career. Teaching is for her a great responsibility (Chapman, 2006; Schon, 1983). She sees herself as an artist living in an artistic world and as a teacher developing technical vocal skills and artistry in her students. Clarice values the artistic impulse that makes people in the music industry want to pursue such a career, and likes to inculcate her students into ways of thinking about singing that incorporates artistic elements. She believes that art is a series of little courageous decisions of artistic decision-making. She, like Deborah, believes in the concept of a "real voice" and that to work with students with good voices makes her job rewarding (Blades-Zeller, 2003).

Clarice was moved by music as a child and is extremely responsive to its emotional tug. She revealed her frustration with her early music education experiences, claiming that they did not prepare her for life in the music profession. She feels her singing teachers did not appreciate the learning and teaching process and that they taught with whatever means they themselves had been taught, noting "they simply had a different view of what was possible then, and taught according to tradition and what they had learned". She has been informed by and dislikes that approach, considering it limiting.

She feels her place in the studio is to fully prepare her students for the profession by whatever means she can to enable their goals. She is passionate about this, stating her role "without question it is enablement. I will not allow someone to come into my room, and not give them every bit of blood I can, to get them where THEY tell me they want to be". She has an expectation of students being prepared and self-sufficient but is at pains to point out that each student is different and will have different approaches to learning, therefore not all will show the kind of self-direction her student Phoebe shows.

Clarice points out the fragility of the one-to-one lesson space. She considers an important part of her job is to create an emotional energy that provides students with feelings of value, trust and safety, so that they will learn singing effectively. She talks about respecting

that space and enabling students to achieve all they want to achieve and that students need to be brave and trust her judgement, but that she needs to constantly evaluate that judgement. Clarice talks about finding a way for her students to learn and that because each student is different she needs to find the best approach for that student, which suggests her approach is unique to each student. She also talks in some detail about the responsive, respectful and honest relationship she shares with her student in the study. Her understanding of the trusting relationship between singer and teacher mirrors the findings in studies by Nerland and Hanken (2004), Clemmons (2006, 2007) and in the work of Chapman (2006).

Clarice is aware of the dangers of her students studying overseas that have the potential to require a remedial approach to their singing training upon return to her practice. She therefore feels that students require time to embed vocal techniques before going to different teachers who may have different artistic sensibilities and different pedagogical approaches. This suggests once again that the aesthetic impulse is entirely subjective and that although research indicates that there are agreed parameters to vocal quality (Southcott and Mitchell, 2013) the subsequent vocal training of the student is unique to the teacher (Mason, 2000; Wistreich, 2000).

She also believes that the classical singing profession requires a capacity for survival in the face of criticism, poor job security, unsuccessful auditions and the like, acknowledging the importance of courage, resilience and perseverance. As she says: "it's the art of surviving while you wait. It's the art of continuing to find your determination and your confidence and your courage every day, enough to get up and do it all over again. And to do it better next time". Her comments echo the anecdotal comments made by Necula's (2009) interviewees and the teachers in the Blades-Zeller study (2003).

Practices

Planning and tools

Clarice follows a tri-partite lesson plan with warm-ups and technical exercises at the start, then repertoire work, then finally a discussion on future goals and reiterating concepts learnt in the lesson. This lesson approach is found in the literature (Blades-Zeller, 2003; Zhukov, 2004; Gaunt, 2009). She, like Deborah, regularly keeps notes on the student and with their input helps plan their short-term and even long-term goals, which is supported by the Blades-Zeller study (2003).

Clarice's tools include piano and music. There is little evidence she uses recording devices in the studio but her student was advised to listen to a new aria, suggesting she, like Deborah, encourages the use of recordings for study (Zhukov, 2004).

Pedagogical strategies

Clarice perceives that at least forty percent of the lesson is spent working on vocal techniques, and that without technical security a career in classical singing is not possible. She describes four main ways in which to learn: through understanding, sensing, hearing and seeing, and that for singing, hearing should come third after understanding and sensing. This approach to learning is slightly at odds with the work of Roth and Verdolini-Abbott (2014), who suggest using sensory targets to effect change rather than explaining concepts, but this is perhaps because Clarice believes that understanding a vocal technical concept first will be more useful in its future application–particularly for a student like Phoebe.

Clarice's approach with Phoebe shows the Knowledge of Results Feedback Loop (Welch, Howard, Himonides, et al, 2005) is being expertly used. She deliberately models musical concepts to Phoebe, perceiving it to be a useful pedagogical technique. She models the sound and provides several different vocal qualities to help Phoebe determine the best one. At times she also sings along with her students. Her lessons with Phoebe are quick moving and contain plenty of dialogue and discussion about artistic and technical concepts.

She uses a range of other pedagogical approaches to help enable learning in her students that is not just about matching aural targets. In some cases she uses a whole body approach, where she has students move around in order to stop them thinking too much. At other times she uses gesture to invoke an idea. This use of gesture and external manipulation of the physical frame as a pedagogical strategy is supported by Blades-Zeller (2003), Welch et al (2005), Chapman (2006), Callaghan, Emmons and Popeil (2012), where research suggests teachers actively make use of sensory and proprioceptive feedback models to assist with vocal development. At other times she matches artistic intent with vocal technique. She also speaks in metaphor (Burwell, 2006) and uses sensory target images (Roth & Verdolini-Abbott, 2014) to illustrate her ideas and provide a visual context of the physical action.

She inculcates her students into ways of being by recommending certain texts above others, by making them sight-read unfamiliar scores and by giving them information about the art form, including character and plot analysis.

She spends quite a bit of time on artistic expression and in many of her lessons explains the connection between artistry, compositional techniques, and the singing technique required to meet the artistic component. This approach is unique to this teacher in this study, as neither Mark nor Deborah were seen to use this approach. It might be speculated that any perceived absence of artistic impulse on their part might instead be due to the aptitude and readiness of their students at that particular point in their learning.

Teaching Modes

There is evidence of dialogue and student-based learning, but also instructional teaching in the video excerpts. Instructional scaffolding, both musical and spoken dialogue, is

evident and feedback is immediate. The Knowledge of Results Feedback loop (Welch, Howard, Himonides, et al, 2005) is well in evidence throughout, however, Phoebe almost invariably talks through her physical sensations and engages in considerable dialogue with Clarice to further develop her understanding. Phoebe is free to ask questions and the pedagogy appears loosely based on experiential learning approaches and transformational learning (Carey & Grant, 2014). A mentor-like approach is evident throughout and Clarice is invariably positive and cheerful when talking with Phoebe.

Phoebe

Values and Beliefs

Phoebe perceived that she wanted to be "her" before she wanted to be a singer–she felt that she needed to reconcile the two before making her singer identity a permanent one. She too perceived that she "was" her instrument, and it was not until a mid-degree travel experience that she developed her narrative sense of self as a singer (Bruner, 1996). She talked about studying overseas and the need to be at the birthplace of the composers she was studying in order to better learn how to sing their music.

She believes that work is her panacea. Music helps her maintain focus in the face of illness or stress: "I always have my work". Her goal-focussed approach is indicative of good self-efficacy and self-regulation and is indicated in the research as being an important condition for a successful career (Blades-Zeller, 2003).

Phoebe believes her singing teacher is more like a coach, someone who understands the rigors of the profession, and supports her in times of performance stress. She believes the relationship between teacher and student is based on reciprocal trust, care and respect, and that her teacher is fundamental to her vocal development.

Phoebe talked about her friendships at her institution and the supportive networks she had made, commenting on the friendly, collaborative environment there but also was aware that her peers were her competition, which mirrors the Kingsbury (1988) study findings. Like Jennifer and Vanessa, Phoebe found that the environment for peer performances was not always a positive one, supporting findings from the more recent Master class studies by Creech, Gaunt, Hallam & Robertson (2009), as well as the Long, Creech, Gaunt and Hallam (2014) study.

Practices

Pedagogical strategies

Phoebe believes her teacher works in a way that is perceptive of her learning approach and styles, which she describes as fast moving, questioning and collaborative. She values the approach taken by her teacher, which she describes as trusting, honest and productive (Clemmons, 2007; Nerland & Hanken, 2004; Gaunt, 2008; Carey & Grant, 2014).

She likes that her teacher models different vocal concepts and that she can choose between them.

Phoebe recognises the difficulty she has in articulating the physical attributes of the voice and often uses physical gestures to make the non-verbal connection between the ideas and the process. She explains that singing involves physical, expressive and intellectual elements and that learning to sing incorporates all these elements. She believes the ears and body get used to what is being asked of them over time.

Phoebe describes a tripartite approach to learning singing: the first element is developing an understanding of vocal and artistic concepts. The second element is being able to embody the concepts and the third element she believes is permanently cementing those mental and physical concepts in both mind and body.

Phoebe takes responsibility for her learning, ensuring the trust between teacher and student is maintained. She practices more than two hours per day and is working to achieve her goal to become an opera singer by entering auditions and competitions. She used to work several jobs but has cut back to focus on her singing with the help of a University scholarship. She is aware of the long time between undergraduate studies and employment but was actively working towards attaining training places and scholarships to fill that gap.

Comment

The learning and teaching relationship in this dyad is characterised by close, trusting, empathetic and artistic qualities well matched by both teacher and student. While the relationship between Clarice and Phoebe was not the only important feature of this study it was a defining element in how the narrative was ultimately shaped.

Clarice appears to teach in a modified master apprentice mode–that is, Clarice carefully navigates her way around the needs of the student to find the best approach for her learning, while still maintaining an impressive, gentle authority. She is ever respectful of her student and provides positive feedback at all times, while guiding the student through incremental stages of vocal development. She inculcates Phoebe into ways of doing that are intrinsic to classical singing traditions, such as was shown in the first lesson excerpt, and trusts that Phoebe will develop the dispositions and attributes unique to the art form.

Clarice's pedagogical approach is targeted specifically to Phoebe's needs. Given Clarice's distrust of what she believes are certain contradictory findings in voice science, she prefers to develop her pedagogy across a range of possible choices, mediated by her aesthetic ideals and dependent on the needs of the student. Clarice's teaching is also informed by her own unsatisfactory learning experiences from teachers, who she explains "simply had a different view of what was possible then, and taught according to tradition and what they had learned". She prefers to model "an informed practice to my students. I hope it helps them to respect the process of teaching and learning". As a result, Phoebe perceives Clarice works

to her learning style and believes her lessons are "a very collaborative process, which we're both happy to be a part of". The tacit understandings, dispositions and attributes of Clarice's singing teaching are unconsciously taken up by Phoebe, indicative perhaps of some very skilful, empathetic teaching on Clarice's part, particularly given Phoebe's impressive intellectual acuity and capacity for self-reflection.

Phoebe is given permission to explore her physicality, voice, her understanding about singing and her own artistic impulses, which might be considered unusual in a master/apprentice relationship. Clarice's strongly held belief that she is an enabler of talent is well in evidence, shown through Phoebe's belief that she is free to explore her voice and musical potential. There is underlying careful guidance from Clarice, however; for example, she picks Phoebe's songs, although Phoebe seems to enjoy learning them. She shows belief in Phoebe's intellectual and vocal capacity by selecting challenging repertoire and setting goals. Phoebe is also positive about her relationship with Clarice, who she sees as "more than just a singing teacher", stating she is "someone that you can trust, and that you know has your best interests at heart, and will help you grow and develop as a musician, as a singer". Phoebe's ongoing relationship with Clarice beyond the end of her degree also points to a strong connectedness between the two.

Phoebe's learning appears to be incremental and scaffolded to develop autonomy over time, but Phoebe also shows a strong sense of responsibility through her consistent practice regime and approach to music learning, which has always been "solid". Her self-regulation is shown through this and other comments about her singing. Her self-belief about her career path is indicated through comments such as "I really feel like I know exactly what I want to be doing", even as she admits that she needed to travel before becoming what she was doing. She explains of her singer self: "being a singer is definitely part of your identity".

The conservatoire environment seems almost silent in this case study and indeed Clarice does not comment on her work place or colleagues. Instead of being a negative, however, Clarice's silence about her workplace might be seen as a way of ensuring anonymity, or ensuring this case study remained focused on the one-to-one dyad rather than the wider conservatoire culture. At any rate, the conservatoire's cultural influence on student Phoebe is pervasive and shown through positive experiences in various activities such as the ensemble project, spending time with her singer friends outside the café, her engagement in performance classes and the comment about work with other teachers, and the scholarship she was awarded. It seems that Phoebe is a member of an institution that values performance activities and promotes a community of practice, and which has been a significant support in times of financial need. In this case study, the institution appears to support the activities of both teacher and student in the creation of a professional classical singer and enables a rich learning environment to occur within the one-to-one tertiary classical singing studio.

Chapter Eight. Conclusion

This qualitative collective case study sought to illuminate participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons. In seeking to understand these phenomena, the study addressed two research questions:

1. What are participant values, beliefs and practices in one-to-one tertiary classical singing lessons?
2. How do participant values and beliefs inform their practices?

In this study, three classical singing teachers, their singing students, and their approaches to learning and teaching were investigated using cultural psychology theories within a social-constructivist paradigm. The collective case study approach aligned well with the theoretical lens of cultural psychology, as there were commonalities of foci between the methodology and theory, in which both cultural psychology theories and case study theories explore socio-cultural interactions within contexts, environments and cultures. Employing a range of data generation events including interview, filmed lessons, email interviews and other artefacts, three analysis stages explored the data using narrative inquiry approaches and case study analysis. Excerpts of the singing lessons were analysed, and three narrative accounts were created from the data of each case, including transcribed excerpts from the singing lessons.

Each case study revealed an emphasis on one or other of three major characteristics: pedagogy, environment, and relationship. While each case study explored all characteristics through the narrative account, the following discussion of each case then focussed on one of these characteristics. Within these major characteristics I then analysed each participant's findings within five main themes that were explored in the literature review and which formed the theoretical framework, alongside theories in cultural psychology: identity, dispositions and attributes, pedagogy, relationality, and community. They were common across all cases and underscored the findings from the research questions.

Summary of findings

In this thesis I theorised that the culture of classical singing is shaped by its environment, its contemporary socio-cultural practices, its historical underpinnings and by the master/apprentice tradition common to most forms of classical music learning. I theorised the master apprentice model promotes the development in the student of tacit understandings, dispositions and attributes necessary for a career in classical singing, and

that classical singing is commonly learned via one-to-one approaches because of the difficulty of imparting complex embodied concepts to classical singers in anything other than this mode.

In investigating these theories the values, beliefs and practices of three eminent classical singing teachers and their students in approaches to singing teaching and learning were illuminated. The eminent singing teachers in this study were strongly self-aware, thoughtful, reflexive participants. Their capacity for self-reflection and clear thinking about the choices they made in their teaching strategies reveal how current singing teaching approaches in this country are being shaped.

The teachers saw themselves as important co-contributors to the skills, disposition and attributes development of the students in the study. They perceived themselves as mentors for their students and that they were in fact agents for the students as the next part of the students' journey began, helping them with competitions and creating valuable networks beyond the confines of the music institution. They perceived themselves as being important to the student, particularly at the outset, so that the student could develop the necessary solid vocal foundation, but also to encourage and facilitate the necessary attitudes of hard work, perseverance and commitment required for a successful career in the music industry. Their tacit values and beliefs were being transmitted to the student through their approaches to pedagogy, mentorship of the student and reflection on life experience. Teachers in the study did not consider themselves singularly responsible for their student. Their teaching activities provided just one–very important–aspect of a singing student's education.

The teachers nevertheless appeared intrinsic to how their students functioned over time–how the student coped with the rigors of study and how they developed the necessary skills and dispositions for a career in this industry.

The students in the study revealed common attitudes about singing that have been echoed in the literature. While the findings of each student and teacher dyad were intrinsic to that case, threads of common experience and values were revealed in each of the young women that are found in both anecdotal and empirical research on singing training. Students revealed a common desire to be successful in their lessons and to please their teachers. The students described their teacher's experience, skills and knowledge as being integral to their own development and valued the teacher's singing and pedagogical expertise, care and emotional support, even when the pedagogical relationship was ultimately unsuccessful. While student motivation and firm goal setting seemed fundamental to the successful vocal development of these students, the teachers seemed to also be a crucial factor in enabling the performance careers of two students at least.

Throughout the investigation I found the conservatoire environment in which this learning takes place was equally important for the promotion of these dispositions and attributes for both the student and the teacher. The values held within a particular

conservatoire culture, such as the promotion of particular ideals including excellence in musical activities and the development of quality musicians, were important to how teachers then approached their pedagogy. The successful apprenticeship of the student into the music profession thus appears to require a supportive environment for both teacher and student.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model (1979) indicates how the overarching ideology of classical singing shapes our thinking about its learning and teaching applications, the formation of learning and teaching environments, and how the inhabitants of those environments are influenced by or contribute to the changing socio-cultural landscape. The one-to-one classical music lesson is a common, lived experience in the profession and partly because they are so immersed in what they do teachers may be almost unaware of the powerful impact of culture, tacit knowledge and ways of thinking on their teaching and learning. More than the mere transmission of skills, knowledge and content through prescribed pedagogy, singing teachers are imparting their values and beliefs that are informed not just by their own experience and learning, but by hundreds of years of a long-standing and revered learning and teaching tradition in an equally long-lived artistic profession.

Participant

MICROSYSTEM: Singer and Teacher values and beliefs, experiences, school, home, work, peers; Singing culture within a Conservatorium

MESOSYSTEM: Individual Conservatorium culture overlapping with singing culture and other microsystems

EXOSYSTEM: Learning and teaching environments and the approaches influencing development of the singer

MACROSYSTEM: Dominant Classical singing culture ideologies within Western Art Music since approx 1600AD.
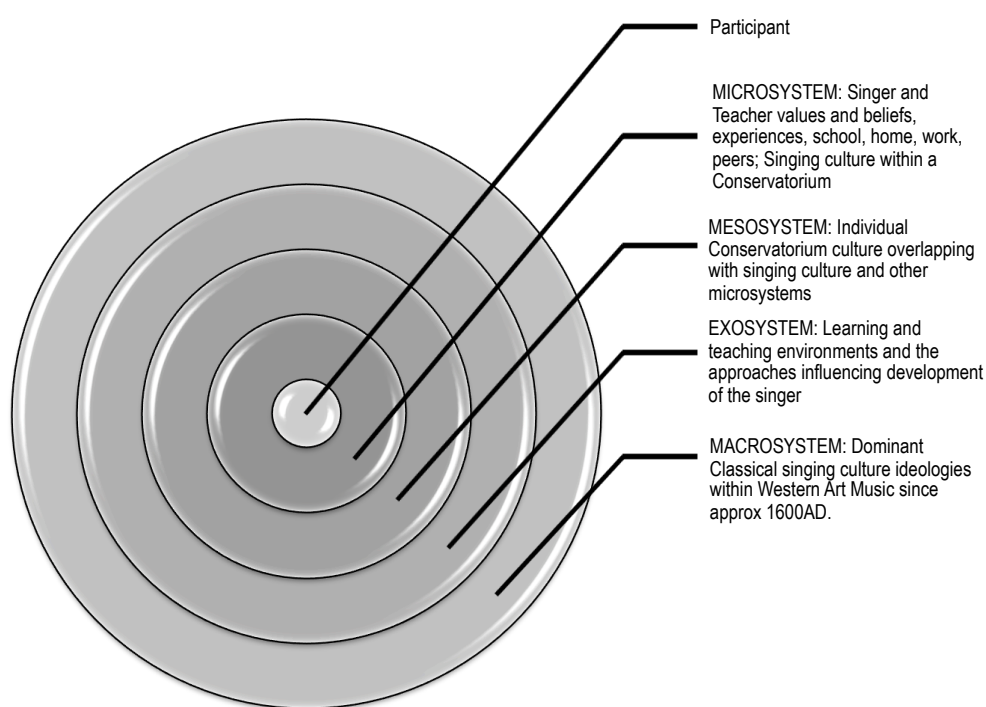
Figure 19: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory model (1979) in classical singing

The minds of classical singers are shaped by their culture, which is in turn also shaped by the participants. As Rogoff reminds us, "humans develop through their changing

participation in the socio-cultural activities of their communities, which also change" (2003, p. 11). Thus, the changing socio-cultural environment of the modern conservatoire is being re-formed from both within and without, in response to the changing demands on its graduates, and also by the changing values and beliefs of its members–the teachers, students, academics, administrators and leaders within their walls. Each conservatoire revealed remarkably different values and approaches to learning that were then reflected in the learning and teaching transactions of the study participants within their singing studios.

Comments on the study

The practices of teachers and students in classical singing teaching and learning are supported by their values and beliefs about the art form, but are also sustained by centuries of historical practices in singing teaching and learning that are maintained to this day. Nevertheless, teachers are ensuring that singing teaching practices are not staying mired in an unchanging tradition. Rather, with their knowledge about voice pedagogy and physiology and their ongoing learning the teachers in this study are ensuring these traditions are being reshaped for current conditions. Rogoff writes, "as people develop through their shared use of cultural tools and practices, they simultaneously contribute to the transformation of cultural tools, practices and institutions" (2003, p. 52). This was evident in the thoughtful way each teacher responded to their student and the pedagogical strategies they employed to achieve the best outcome. It was evident in how teachers were themselves being transformed by their interactions with students and institutions and how they then contributed to the culture of classical singing training within the unique culture of their conservatoire. The values and beliefs of singing teachers and their students are shaped by their experiences in singing performance, learning singing and the cultures in which classical singing training functions. Their minds are likewise shaped by what they learn, how they learn and with whom, and where they learn. As Barrett writes, "we cannot separate mind and cognition from culture and context, values and beliefs, and a culturally mediated identity" (Barrett, 2011, p. 10).

There appears a remarkable link to the master/apprentice model of education in each of the practices of the teachers in this project. Even when the relationship ultimately didn't succeed, as in the case of Mark and Vanessa, each teacher described the desire to provide their students with all the necessary craft skills, dispositions and attributes to pursue a career in classical singing or opera, and embedded this desire in their teaching approach. There was a sense in the videoed lessons, supported by the interview data, that the teachers were imparting core skills, dispositions, attributes and knowledge in order for these apprentice students to enter the journeyman mode of their education once their undergraduate degree was complete.

As this type of career path requires specific craft skills–stage craft, languages, acting, movement and the like, it could be argued universities to which many Australian music institutions are linked do not make adequate provision for the attainment of these skills, instead being concerned with knowledge acquisition skills (the ability to think, rather than do), which is of limited use in the development of domain skills such as vocal performance and which makes no provision at all for the learning of dispositions and attributes required in a musical career. An emergent theme has thus been the role of the environment to support the teaching and learning practices in classical singing. For academic staff in supportive institutions, apprenticeship into classical singing is the province of the whole institution, not just one singing teacher. For teachers without such support, I suggest it would be difficult to provide students with all the learning opportunities, craft dispositions and attributes necessary to pursue a career in singing. It appears institutions that provide students with a range of complementary learning opportunities, particularly in developing craft skills in classical singing performance, inculcate students into a way of being that mirrors professional operatic and oratorio practices.

Arguably, tertiary music institutions are there to enculturate singers into a performing career through the development of appropriate dispositions and attributes, skills, practices and content knowledge that will support them in their future careers. Without having access to a range of high quality learning opportunities within a supportive institution, including the provision of one-to-one lessons, I wonder how any singer can develop the dispositions, attributes and skills needed in the classical music profession.

Innovations of the study

This collective case study was innovative in the way it examined the values, beliefs and practices of three eminent tertiary singing teachers and their singing students. Using a combination of collective case study and narrative inquiry analysis I explored the learning and teaching relationship between each teacher and student dyad, their interpersonal interactions, and pedagogical practices within the one-to-one tertiary singing studio in a conservatoire environment. To ensure rigor, many data generation events were employed to explore the phenomenon, including multiple interviews, video footage of singing lessons and other artefacts. An ethical element of this study was the opportunity for participants themselves to become active members of the research process through repeated member checks of video data and interview transcripts.

The subsequent analysis of these data events was approached in three ways. The first, using narrative inquiry methods, was a critical event analysis of singing lesson video excerpts. The second was the storying of the interviews, artefacts and video data through three separate narrative accounts, and included repeated member-checks to interrogate my

interpretations and representations of participants and events. The third was the discussion chapter analysis of each participant's values, beliefs and practices taken from the narrative accounts. With three stages of analysis and a combination of case study and narrative inquiry approaches, rich interpretations of the data were possible in each case study, enabling multiple meanings to be explored and revealing findings distinctive to each.

The project revealed a unique learning and teaching connection in each dyad, with teachers and students each reacting in diverse ways to this relationship. It also examined the role and impact of the community and environment on each participant.

One emergent finding was the role of the institution and the promulgation of its values through various practices, and how those values and practices impacted on the teaching and learning interactions of each teacher and student dyad. This finding indicates the powerful impact of environment and community values on its members even over and above the individual relationship between teacher and student.

Directions for future research

While the tertiary music institution's environment has been the subject of some research since Kingsbury's 1988 study, there has been little research that investigates how the values held by the institution inform and influence their teachers' pedagogical practices. Initial findings from this study indicate research in this area would be valuable to determine how best to support their staff and enable the best learning outcomes for students. Perkin's 2012 study on learning cultures provides a useful starting point for such discussions.

Tertiary institutions probably need to reflect on the rate of change they impose upon their staff, particularly in fields such as classical music, with its long-standing traditions and particular learning and teaching approaches. Staff with expectations about what a conservatoire is supposed to offer its undergraduates may find it difficult to understand the rationale for institutions moving away from traditional practices, particularly when there is little current evidence in the literature showing the benefits of these changes to its staff, students and graduates.

Music institutions should investigate how they promote the development of teaching expertise in their teaching staff. For example, are teachers required to undergo professional development in training courses that have little to do with their field? What is the provision for professional development in teaching and learning in classical singing, for example? Given the high rate of sessional and casual teachers in tertiary music institutions, are these employees expected, encouraged or enabled to undertake professional development in their field? Will the university provide training opportunities for them, or the funds to attend conferences or symposia in their field? Intriguingly, will professional development for musicians who teach make any difference to their teaching approach, and will it make any difference to their students' success or otherwise?

Classical singing is an extremely expensive profession for the singer, given that ongoing coaching and singing lessons are considered an indispensable part of the singer's tool kit, despite no guaranteed employment. Singers who wish to maintain their voice and develop it further typically pay for their own lessons after graduation. The expense of providing this type of education model is enormous; yet underpinning its continuation is the belief of the efficacy of such a model. Certainly classical singing to the quality demanded of singers in the twenty-first century is not possible without significant investment in one-to-one lessons, both in time and money. Research is recommended to determine how classical singers maintain and develop their skills further prior to their professional careers commencing.

Institutional support for undergraduates and higher-degree students is typically withdrawn once the student graduates. There is a need to examine federal financial policy around the provision of education models such as this at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. A related direction for future research is to ascertain the value of formalising mentoring into the profession during these transition points. It is worth investigating whether peak bodies such as the Australia Council awards grants for journeyman classical singers to better enable transition into the profession.

Other research directions include the impact of gender in one-to-one lessons across musical instruments and genres. Likewise, research on the one-to-one dyad that explores the cultures of other musical genres such as musical theatre is recommended.

Finally, research is recommended into a comparative study between Australian and world conservatoires to examine the various modes of delivery of music lessons and explore the cross-cultural differences between institutions and countries.

Concluding remarks

The value of the master/apprentice approach typified in the one-to-one music lesson has been arguably somewhat undermined in Australia over the last several years, despite the specificity of skills required in musical learning environments and professions necessitating such an intensive approach to ensure performance quality. We still need master craftspeople. We need eminent teachers such as the ones in this study, because the feedback, pedagogy, encouragement and mentorship provided by teachers within a specific culture of learning–the conservatoire–are what the singing students in this study considered intrinsic to enabling their success in their future career. Johansson's (2012) paradoxical concept of teachers as both keepers of tradition and innovators suggests that far from adhering to old ways, music teachers are becoming critically reflexive about their approaches to teaching. The conservatoire's significant role in supporting teachers and its contribution to the apprenticeship of young classical singers also cannot be overlooked. Conservatoires are also

reflecting on their learning cultures (Perkins, 2012) in their inevitable need to adapt to a changing socio-cultural fabric.

So, in the twenty-first century a new master/ apprentice approach is emerging within the conservatoire. Informed by their own teaching and learning experiences, the historical underpinnings of classical singing, their ongoing research, and by their membership in the culture of classical singing, the teachers in this study are encouraging students to develop independence, self-reliance and autonomy in their practice, to take on many different learning opportunities and to develop robust strategies for a future career in classical singing. Teachers are not the be-all-and-end-all of a students' journey. They claim they are but one part of it. The teachers in this study certainly recognise this while simultaneously recognising the significant role they play in building their voices and enabling the students' future career success. There is a disarming modesty about these teachers in their passion for teaching and desire to help their students achieve the best outcome, whatever the circumstances. While they are indeed eminent practitioners they do not propagate the authoritarian, omnipotent approach of the old masters. They deny it.

Postlude

Researcher as participant: reflections on practice

When I commenced this study I believed I was investigating a specific learning and teaching approach: the one-to-one tertiary classical singing lesson. I discovered that while I was superficially interested in the dyadic context, what I really wished to study was classical singers and their singing teachers, and how they developed their values and beliefs about teaching and learning singing. I wished to investigate how this then informed their practice within the conservatoire context and to investigate current conservatoire practices and cultures. In my desire to illuminate the private and complex relationship between singing teacher and student my own teaching has been informed by this project, and the tacit values and beliefs I held about classical singing teaching have been transformed by the findings from this project.

In the years since I began the study I am now employed as a Musical Theatre singing teacher in my hometown Conservatorium. I have a substantial tertiary teaching practice with some twenty-five students. I am still considered an inexperienced teacher in the tertiary area and I use the findings from the study to reflect on my own developing practice. I am grateful to have had this opportunity prior to commencing my tertiary teaching career. More importantly, as a teacher in the musical theatre domain I feel a sense of belonging that was missing from all my other musical interactions and singing experiences. Here, my love of jazz, my experience of rock and pop, and my training and experience in classical singing are united in powerful ways that sustains my musical identity, my self-identity and gives my crossover "portfolio" career (Bennett, 2008) value and relevance.

I have been surprised and excited by the culture developing in my workplace. It seems very different to the learning cultures of my classical singing experience, where the development of singers' voices and musicianship appeared to be held in such ridiculously high esteem that vital stagecraft and acting classes were disregarded or abandoned altogether (probably due to the high cost of providing such classes, too). In my workplace, where acting, dancing and singing are treated with equal respect, we explicitly train our students in all three skills. We expect the students, over the three years of the course, to develop self-motivation, self-direction and to be self-reliant and resilient regardless of vocal talent. We value hard work, perseverance, camaraderie, talent, commitment and fearlessness in both our academic staff and students. We openly value the development of performance skills and the craft domain skills vital to a career in this field and do not apologise for the activity-based nature of many of our offerings. The culture we are forming, even in the short amount of time the program has been running, has had an immediate impact in my one-to-one singing studio.

Tertiary singing students, in my small experience are substantially different from the private student or high school student in the home studio. They show differences in motivation, practice regimes, attitudes of and toward peers, and long-term goals. Tertiary music students have chosen their career path. They are impatient, demanding, hard working young adults who are in the process of developing a singer identity (amongst other identities also in development), and who are being shaped by the culture around them.

As a result I have become fiercely reflexive about my teaching approach. With my students I discuss approaches to teaching and learning. We discuss the ways in which they learn that I may better assist them to reach the skills and understanding needed for independent study. I am curious about the journey that my students go through to become autonomous, independent learners and we spend quite some time unpacking the psychology required for vocal success. Relating to my pedagogical approach, I use YouTube videos to show students the larynx in movement, and we share and comment on videoed performances of excellent musical theatre performers. I provide them with readings on physiology and have developed group sessions for my own students so that they can develop their diagnostic tools for helping their peers. Students regularly attend Master classes and workshops and discuss with me their findings from those experiences.

As I further develop my skills–those in diagnosis, communication and capacity to explain concepts–my experience grows and my toolkit expands to accommodate new ideas and approaches. With ongoing self-reflection I make informed decisions about how to teach and I keep my students likewise informed. I observe the lessons of my colleagues and attend professional development workshops and conferences on singing and singing teaching. My colleagues and I regularly discuss pedagogical strategies and we willingly share information, working as a team within a supportive and friendly environment. At times we share students and work collaboratively to develop their singing skills.

I see myself as one element in a building block of skills development–I am not singularly responsible for my students' success or failure, and I am one of many educators on whom my students rely. I have been uplifted and humbled by my students' successes and failures, and I feel responsible to ensure that what my students learn does not negatively impact their development whether in vocal technique, domain skills, or dispositions and attributes.

I also retrospectively value the skills and expertise of my own singing teachers and am ever grateful for their wisdom, encouragement and care. Even when the pedagogy was imperfect– as it clearly must have been back in the days when research on the human singing voice was neither valued nor discussed–their own experience, aesthetic judgements and intelligence allowed me to develop my operatic singing voice, dispositions and attributes to some degree of quality. After all, they had to teach *me*! Teaching and learning is never a one-way street. Both teacher and student are responsible participants in learning.

I am immensely grateful to my study participants for allowing me a window to their world. It is because of them that I have begun to develop a pedagogical approach that takes into account the psychological and physical needs of the student, and that informs and is informed by the culture of learning in my workplace. And I am forming a rich tapestry of values and beliefs about singing teaching and learning that has been informed by their own. I have benefited immeasurably from their wisdom, humility, patience, good humour and expertise. To the teachers and students in this study: thank you.

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Appendix One

Permissions and informed consent packages

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THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons

Jessica O'Bryan (PhD Candidate)

Professor Margaret Barrett (Principal Supervisor)   **Doctor Felicity Baker (Associate Supervisor)**

School of Music, The University of Queensland

Address line 1
Address line 2
Address line 3
Address line 4
Address line 5
Address line 6
Address line 7

Dear...................................,

I write to formally seek your permission for a research study **Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons** to be undertaken at your institution. This study aims to:

Identify those pedagogical strategies and practices that support classical voice student learning at tertiary institutions;

Identify those pedagogical structures and processes that encourage and maintain innovation in voice pedagogy;

Identify beliefs and values of the participants in relation to models of voice tuition in tertiary environments;

Provide greater understanding of the environmental conditions and factors that are conducive to developing and nurturing emerging classical singers in tertiary environments.

The study will provide valuable data on the nature of the teaching and learning of voice, and contribute to our understanding of how voice pedagogy and practice is best nurtured and developed. Should you grant your permission for the study to be undertaken at your institution you and/or your nominee will be asked to assist the implementation of the project by distributing the enclosed information sheets and consent forms to the following groups/individuals:

1. Teacher of Voice: (*name of teacher*)

2. One current second year or above student of (*name of teacher*)
3. One former singing student of the voice teacher *(nominated by teacher)*

Study description

The study involves the following procedures:

Phase Two commences late February 2010 and runs until approximately July. It involves two x individual interviews prior to and post the remote observation procedure with a classical singing teacher participant (possibly the Head of Voice at your institution) and their nominated classical singing student participant, to ascertain their perceptions of teaching and learning in one-on-one environments. 12 weeks of a lesson series will be remotely (without the researcher present) video-recorded between one voice teacher and their singing student. Video data will be used for analysis purposes only. A third interview with a former student of the voice teacher is sought to further strengthen the data generation. A reflective question series mid study for the singing teacher participant and the singing student participant will be generated through email contact. This procedure provides opportunity for added richness of data through self reflection by the participants, triangulated with that of the observations and interviews. An added means to explore teaching and learning in group environments will be non-participant observation of one group activity led by the voice teacher, recorded via field-note and video. Video data will be used for analysis purposes only. I seek permission to be granted access to one group activity.

Ethical considerations

This study has been cleared by one of the human research ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines, [approval number SoM-ETH09-01/001/A-JOB]. You are, of course, free to discuss your participation in this study with the research team. If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer at the School of Music on 07) 3365 4949.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance in facilitating this project and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Jessica O'Bryan

Student Investigator
School of Music, University of Queensland
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Professor Margaret Barrett – Principal Advisor   Dr Felicity Baker – Associate Advisor
School of Music, The University of Queensland   School of Music, The University of Queensland
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THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons

Jessica O'Bryan, PhD Candidate

Professor Margaret Barrett, Principal Advisor   **Dr Felicity Baker, Associate Advisor**

School of Music, The University of Queensland

Dear Singing Teacher,

I invite you to participate in the research study ***Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons.*** This study aims to:

Identify voice teaching strategies and practices that support classical voice student learning at tertiary institutions;
Identify those voice teaching structures and processes that encourage and maintain innovation and quality in voice pedagogy;
Identify beliefs and values of the participants in relation to models of voice tuition in tertiary environments;
Provide greater understanding of the environmental conditions and factors that are conducive to developing and nurturing emerging classical singers in tertiary environments.

Should you agree to participate in this study you will provide valuable information on the nature of the teaching and learning of classical voice, and contribute to our understanding of how voice teaching and learning in tertiary institutions is best nurtured and developed. You have been identified as a potential participant by your current standing in the singing community in singing and singing pedagogy, and by your current position at your university. Your participation is entirely voluntary. Please note that I have not been given any of your personal contact details by your employer.

Study description
The study will follow the first semester of the usual University year, for approximately four months in 2010 from March until the end of June.
Should you agree to participate in the project you will be asked to:

1. Recommend to your Head of School one of your current singing students (preferably not first year) from your tertiary institution who will also take part in the study.
2. Nominate one former singing student to your Head of School for an interview.
3. Participate in 2 recorded interviews about your experience, singing teaching practices and current singing lesson series of the student nominated. One interview will be conducted prior to the lesson series, and the last will take place after the completion of the lesson series. The interviews will be taken at a mutually convenient time. You will be invited to review the transcriptions of the interviews for comment and/or amendment.
4. Record up to 12 lessons taken over one semester with one student, using a video recorder and videotapes provided by the researcher for the purpose. Both you and the student will

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be trained in the use of the video recorder. The video footage is to capture the learning and teaching strategies and interactions, and will be used for analysis purposes only.

5. Every two weeks, to send the researcher the videotapes, on which you have written the lesson dates, of the most recent singing lessons. Prepaid and addressed post-packs will be provided to you by the researcher.

6. Respond via written email journal to some reflective questions sent via email, part way through the semester. The questions will focus on your current teaching strategies, your communication and your rapport with the student. This reflective email will provide written data to assist with understandings and analysis arising from the videoed lessons and will enable you as the participant to contribute your own written thoughts to the study.

7. *Agree to be observed as you lead one group voice activity at your institution. Observations will be video-recorded and recorded by field notes and will focus on the learning and teaching strategies employed by you and students in this environment. The purpose of the video recording is to capture the learning and teaching strategies and interactions, and the video footage will be used for analysis purposes only. Examples of group voice activities that you lead may include: Master-classes, Choral and Operatic rehearsals, general performance rehearsals, Stagecraft classes, group voice lessons, music style classes, or various combinations of the above. If you do not lead any group activities at your institution please ignore this last point.*

Ethical Considerations

It is possible that you might feel uncomfortable during the interviews and/or observations. Should this occur you may stop the interviews at any point and/or request that you are not included in the study. You may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice, effect or explanation.

The other person in your university to be directly involved in the project will be your singing student. Other singing students from your institution may be observed in the group activity only.

How much time will it take up and how disruptive will it be?

The duration of your involvement in the study should be approximately four months from March 2010 to the end of June 2010. Planning and communication of events will take place via email or telephone, with preference given to your preferred mode of communication.

Interviews: Each interview should take no more than 90 minutes in total, barring organizing appropriate meeting places and times, for a total of 180 minutes.

Video training and taping: The time taken to train you in the use of the video should not exceed twenty minutes. If your lesson room is used by other teachers I would please ask that the camera is removed and reset each week, for security reasons and to ensure confidentiality. There should be minimal disruption to your regular schedule if the video is left in place for the lesson each week.

Sending off the video packages: Two minutes to package the video in the prepaid and pre-addressed envelopes provided and sent through your university mail system.

Mid-semester email journal questions: Twenty minutes would be considered an appropriate response time to answer the questions being sent at this time.

Confidentiality

In any publication, all names (universities, locations, teachers and students) will be replaced with pseudonyms. Potentially identifying features such as the size of the Faculty; length of teaching

experience and performance experience of the teachers and students will be fictionalized within the published documents and every effort will be made to ensure anonymity. The videos and transcripts will be given pseudonyms. Transcripts of the interviews will be made available to you for comment and/or amendment.

All data will be kept in a secure, locked facility in the School of Music at the University of Queensland for a period of five years, after which it will be destroyed. Cross-references from pseudonyms to real names will be kept in a password-protected file on a secure server at the University of Queensland. Electronic data will be kept in password-protected files on a secure server at the University of Queensland.

You will receive a summary copy of publications that arise from the study.

Voluntary participation
You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time prior to granting final approvals for the publication. If you choose to withdraw, you may do so without prejudice, without effect or explanation. If requested, you may withdraw all data you have contributed to the study.

This study has been cleared by one of the human research ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines [approval number SoM-ETH09-01/001/A-JOB]. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with the research team. If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer at the School of Music on 07) 3365 4949.

You may indicate your consent to participate by signing the attached consent form and returning it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope. Should you agree to participate in the study, on receipt of your signed form I shall contact you to arrange the processes you will be involved in.

I encourage you to consider joining me in this project and I look forward to speaking with you to discuss your participation. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or would like some more information. I encourage you to keep this information letter for your own records.

Yours Sincerely,

Jessica O'Bryan

Student Investigator
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Phone: 3365 7367 / 0439 393 545 Email: j.obryan@uq.edu.au

Professor Margaret Barrett – Principal Advisor   Dr Felicity Baker – Associate Advisor
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Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons

SINGING TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Purpose: This study investigates the values, beliefs and practices of participants of classical voice tuition, specifically the teaching and learning practices that support classical voice.

Duration: The duration of my participation in the project will be approximately three months (between March – June 2010).

Procedures: I understand that I will participate in two videoed interviews; be observed via video in a lesson series with one student over one semester, be observed and videoed leading a group singing activity, and be asked to respond to an email asking questions about my teaching and learning practices, communication and rapport with the student. I understand that I will be invited to review the transcriptions of the interviews for comment and/or amendment.

Risks: I understand that there is a minimal risk that I might feel uncomfortable during the interviews and videoed observations.

Benefits: I understand that my participation will benefit the music education and singing community through providing new knowledge on the effective teaching of voice. I might derive personal benefit from participation in the study for the opportunities it will provide for further reflection on my experiences in teaching singing.

Confidentiality and Privacy: I understand that my privacy will be protected through the use of pseudonyms and the fictionalization of identifying personal details in any written reports arising from the project; cross-references from pseudonyms to real names will be kept in a password-protected file on a secure server at The University of Queensland for a period of five years, after which it will be destroyed.

Voluntary Participation: I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary. I may choose to withdraw from the project at any time without prejudice, effect or explanation. Should I wish I may also withdraw any data contributed to the study at that time.

Contact details: I understand that should I have further questions in relation to this project I may contact Jessica O'Bryan (email j.obryan@uq.edu.au, tel 07 3365 7367 or 0439 393 545) or Professor Margaret Barrett (email m.barrett@uq.edu.au, tel 07 3365 3513).

Feedback and Results: I understand that I shall be forwarded a summary of any publications arising from the study.

This study has been cleared by one of the human research ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines [approval number SoM-ETH09-01/001/A-JOB]. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with the research team. If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer at the School of Music on 07) 3365 4949.

The procedures and ethical implications of the study have been fully explained to me and I give my informed consent to participate in this research.

Name: _____Signature _____ Date _____
            (*Teacher Participant)*

Name: _____Signature_____ Date _____
            (Witness)

Name: _____ Signature _____ Date _____
            (*Student Investigator)*

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THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
A U S T R A L I A

Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons

Jessica O'Bryan, PhD Candidate

Professor Margaret Barrett, Principal Advisor   **Dr Felicity Baker, Associate Advisor**

School of Music, The University of Queensland

Dear Student,

I invite you to participate in the research study ***Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons.*** This study aims to:

Identify voice teaching strategies and practices that support classical voice student learning at tertiary institutions;
Identify those voice teaching structures and processes that encourage and maintain innovation and quality in voice pedagogy;
Identify beliefs and values of the participants in relation to models of voice tuition in tertiary environments;
Provide greater understanding of the environmental conditions and factors that are conducive to developing and nurturing emerging classical singers in tertiary environments.

Should you agree to participate in this study you will provide valuable information on the nature of the teaching and learning of classical voice, and contribute to our understanding of how voice teaching and learning in tertiary institutions is best nurtured and developed. You have been identified as a potential participant by your Head of Music at your university. Your participation is entirely voluntary. Please note that I have not been given any of your personal contact details.

Study description
The study will follow the first semester of the usual University year, for approximately four months in 2010 from March until the end of June.
Should you agree to participate in the project you will be asked to:

1. Participate in 2 recorded interviews about your singing experience, singing learning practices and the current singing lesson series with your singing teacher. One interview will be conducted prior to the lesson series, and the last will take place after the completion of the lesson series. The interviews will be taken at a mutually convenient time. You will be invited to review the transcriptions of the interviews for comment and/or amendment.
2. Be observed in up to 10 lessons taken over one semester with your singing teacher, using a video recorder and videotapes provided by the researcher for the purpose. Both you and your teacher will be trained in the use of the video recorder. The video footage is to capture the learning and teaching strategies and interactions, and will be used for analysis purposes only.

3. Respond via written email journal to some reflective questions sent via email, part way through the semester. The questions will focus on your current learning strategies and your communication with your singing teacher. This reflective email will provide written data to assist with understandings and analysis arising from the videoed lessons and will enable you as the participant to contribute your own written thoughts to the study.

Ethical Considerations

It is possible that you might feel uncomfortable during the interviews and/or observations. Should this occur you may stop the interviews at any point and/or request that you are not included in the study. You may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice, effect or explanation. The other person in your university to be directly involved in the project will be your singing teacher.

How much time will it take up and how disruptive will it be?
The duration of your involvement in the study should be approximately four months from March 2010 to the end of June 2010. Planning and communication of events will take place via email or telephone, with preference given to your preferred mode of communication.
> **Interviews:** Each interview should not exceed 90 minutes, barring organizing appropriate meeting places and times, for a total of 180 minutes.
> **Video training and taping:** The time taken to train you in the use of the video should not exceed twenty minutes.
> **Mid-semester email journal questions:** Twenty minutes would be considered an appropriate response time to the email questions being sent at this time.

Confidentiality
In any publication, all names (universities, locations, teachers and students) will be replaced with pseudonyms. Potentially identifying features such as the size of the Faculty; length of teaching experience; and performance experience of the teachers and students will be fictionalized within the published documents and every effort will be made to ensure anonymity. The videos and transcripts will be given pseudonyms. Transcripts of the interviews will be made available to you for comment and/or amendment.

All data will be kept in a secure, locked facility in the School of Music at the University of Queensland for a period of five years, after which it will be destroyed. Cross-references from pseudonyms to real names will be kept in a password-protected file on a secure server at the University of Queensland. Electronic data will be kept in password-protected files on a secure server at the University of Queensland.

You will receive a summary copy of publications that arise from the study.

Voluntary participation
You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time prior to granting final approvals for the publication. If you choose to withdraw, you may do so without prejudice, without effect or explanation. If requested, you may withdraw all data you have contributed to the study.

This study has been cleared by one of the human research ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines [approval number SoM-ETH09-01/001/A-JOB]. You are free to discuss your participation in this

study with the research team. If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer at the School of Music on 07) 3365 4949.

You may indicate your consent to participate by signing the attached consent form and returning it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope. Should you agree to participate in the study, on receipt of your signed form I shall contact you to arrange the processes you will be involved in.

I encourage you to consider joining me in this project and I look forward to speaking with you to discuss your participation. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or would like some more information. I encourage you to keep this information letter for your own records.

Yours Sincerely,

Jessica O'Bryan

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Investigating Participant Values, Beliefs and Practices of Tertiary Classical Singing Lessons

SINGING STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Purpose: This study investigates the values, beliefs and practices of participants of classical voice tuition, specifically the teaching and learning practices that support classical voice.

Duration: The duration of my participation in the project will be approximately four months (between March – end of June 2010).

Procedures: I understand that I will participate in two videoed interviews; be observed via video in a lesson series with my singing teacher over one semester, and be asked to respond to an email asking questions about my learning practices, and communication with my singing teacher. I understand that I will be invited to review the transcriptions of the interviews for comment and/or amendment.

Risks: I understand that there is a minimal risk that I might feel uncomfortable during the interviews and videoed observations.

Benefits: I understand that my participation will benefit the music education and singing community through providing new knowledge on the effective teaching of voice. I might derive personal benefit from participation in the study for the opportunities it will provide for further reflection on my experiences in learning singing.

Confidentiality and Privacy: I understand that my privacy will be protected through the use of pseudonyms and the fictionalization of identifying personal details in any written reports arising from the project; cross-references from pseudonyms to real names will be kept in a password-protected file on a secure server at The University of Queensland for a period of five years, after which it will be destroyed.

Voluntary Participation: I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary. I may choose to withdraw from the project at any time without prejudice, effect or explanation. Should I wish I may also withdraw any data contributed to the study at that time.

Contact details: I understand that should I have further questions in relation to this project I may contact Jessica O'Bryan (email j.obryan@uq.edu.au, tel 07 3365 7367 or 0439 393 545) or Professor Margaret Barrett (email m.barrett@uq.edu.au, tel 07 3365 3513).

Feedback and Results: I understand that I shall be forwarded a summary of any publications arising from the study.

This study has been cleared by one of the human research ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines [approval number SoM-ETH09-01/001/A-JOB]. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with the research team. If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer at the School of Music on 07) 3365 4949.

The procedures and ethical implications of the study have been fully explained to me and I give my informed consent to participate in this research.

Name: _____Signature _____ Date _____
                (*Student Participant*)

Name: _____Signature_____ Date _____
                (*Witness*)

Name: _____ Signature _____ Date _____
                (*Student Investigator*)

Appendix Two

Interview Schedules

Interviews: Teachers

Interview One

Topics:

1. *History and experience*
   a. What type of early musical experiences did you have?
      i. At home
      ii. At school
      iii. Outside school
   b. Thinking back on your music experiences, is there a specific experience that stands out in your memory? Could you tell me about that?
   c. When did you know you were going to become a singer?
   d. What made you decide to become a singer?
   e. Can you tell me a little of the experiences you had in your music course while at university as an undergraduate? What sort of courses did you do, such as Aural, Music histories etc?
   f. What were some of the different singing activities you were involved in?
   g. Can you tell me about a singing teacher who has had a big impact on your life?
      i. Can you explain why they had this impact?
   h. What is your experience in singing and performance?
      i. Can you tell me about a seminal experience as a performer?
      ii. What was it like as a singer trying to make it in the profession?
   i. Tell me about your own experience as a singing teacher
      i. When did you start teaching
      ii. What were the circumstances that brought you to teaching
      iii. How long have you been working here at this institution?
      iv. Have you worked as a peripatetic singing teacher prior to working here, and if so, for how long?
   j. How has your performance career impacted upon your teaching career and vice versa?
      i. In interruptions and interference
      ii. In understanding of the singing voice
      iii. In technical aspects of singing teaching
      iv. Emotionally?
2. *Beliefs and values* regarding teaching and learning to sing, including strengths, weaknesses and preferred styles
   a. What is the most important aspect of one-on-one singing teaching to you?
   b. Can you tell me about an experience you had as a student that was a positive learning experience?
   c. Can you tell me about a negative experience you had when you were a singing student and why it may have been so?
   d. Can you tell me about a positive learning experience you have had with a student?
   e. Can you tell me about a negative experience you have had with a student?
3. Teaching *practices*
   a. Do you have a specific way of running a one-on-one singing lesson?
   b. What are some of the activities you undertake with the student?
   c. What is your preferred length of singing lesson?
   d. Are there any activities that you do that your own singing teachers did not?
      i. If so, what are some of those activities?
      ii. What are some of the activities you do that you were taught by your singing teachers?
   e. Is there any activity you do as a singing teacher which you wish your teachers had taught you as a student?
   f. Can you tell me about any note taking or planning preparation you might do for the lesson?
4. *Aims and expectations* of singing teaching
   a. What were your aims as a singing student when having singing lessons?
   b. When you began teaching, what were some of the expectations you had in the lessons?
      i. Do you think this may have changed over time?

      c.   As a singing teacher, what are your aims with your singing students who are studying voice at university level?

      d.   In what way might this differ from your students having lessons outside the university or tertiary environment?

      e.   What are some of the difficulties of teaching singing at tertiary level?

5.   Student and teacher *relationships*

      a.   Tell me about the singing students that enter your studio.

      b.   What are some of the peculiarities they bring to the lesson?

      c.   What are some of the assumptions you think they bring to the lesson?

      d.   What is it like to work with a student who does not seem motivated?

      e.   What is it like to work with a highly motivated student?

      f.   Do you think the attitudes of your singing student affects how you teach them?

      g.   Tell me a little about the student who will be undertaking the study with you.

Email questions

1.   *The current lesson series*

      a.   What are some songs the student is learning in your lessons?

      b.   Can you describe the structure of your typical singing lesson?

      c.   Can you describe some of the vocal techniques you have worked with the student this semester?

      d.   How do you teach these techniques to the student? (describe methods you might employ to explain or demonstrate a technique)

      e.   What (if any) changes are going on in the student's vocal technique at the moment?

      f.   How would you describe your teaching and learning relationship with your student?

      g.   How much lesson planning are you doing in preparation for your lessons every week with the student?

      h.   How much planning are you doing in your administrative duties in your employment?

2.   *Life and current circumstances impacting on singing and teaching practices*

      a.   Can you describe your general state of vocal health at present?

      b.   What events (if any) are impacting on your own singing and your students' singing lessons at the moment?

      c.   Are you involved in any singing performance events (concerts, operas etc) at the moment? What are they?

      d.   Are you involved in any other singing activities at university apart from the one-on-one lessons? What are they?

Interview Two

This interview will be a video prompted interview, with the teacher asked to reflect upon some of the traits identified and noted by the researcher.

The video: Questions will be asked in conjunction with video prompts. Examples of questions are below.

1.   I'm going to show you some excerpts from the video and I'd like you to take a look at them and we'll have a chat about what's going on in the excerpt.

      a.   What is going on there? (show excerpt)

      b.   What happened at that point?

      c.   How did you respond?

      d.   How was it resolved?

2.   Now that the videoed lessons with your student have finished for the semester, can you reflect on some of the aspects of the lessons? (prompts below)

      a.   Technique development/Pedagogy

      b.   Content

      c.   Musicianship

      d.   Interpretation

      e.   Relationship

      f.   Communication

      g.   Attitudes

3. How has your teaching and learning relationship with your student developed over this time?
    a. How has their singing developed?
    b. Are there any big changes occurring that make it easier or harder to teach them?
    c. How has their understanding of your ideas improved?
    d. Have you changed your approach to the student at any time? How and why?
4. What do you feel were some of the more challenging aspects of these lessons?
    a. Did the video interfere with the lessons?
    b. What impact do you think you or the student's emotional or psychological state had on any particular lesson?
    c. Has communication with your student improved or deteriorated during this time?
    d. Why do you think this might be the case?
5. How did life events impact upon these lessons for your students and you?
    a. Were the lessons interrupted during the semester?
    b. If so, what was the impact of this interruption?
    c. How would you rate your student against her cohort at the university, and is she indicative of the quality of student the university attracts?
    d. Can you comment on how you perceive the university meets your needs as an employee?
    e. Is there anything else you would like to add about the study and your perceptions of what you expect or hope your involvement will achieve?

Interviews: Singing students

Interview One

Topics: these headers are for the interviewer's planning and will not necessarily be revealed to the interviewee.

1. *History and experience*
    a. Describe your earliest recollections of music and learning music.
    b. Can you tell me a little about your family life – growing up, was there music in the house, did your parents support your singing and music making?
    c. What have some of your key influences been? What role did they play, and to what extent?
    d. What role have your family/parents played in the decisions you have made about singing?
    e. When did you know you were going to become a singer?
    f. What have you done in singing and performance prior to coming to uni?

2. *Beliefs and values* regarding learning to sing, including strengths, weaknesses and preferred styles
    a. What is the most important aspect of your singing lessons?
    b. Can you tell me about an experience you have had as a singing student that was a positive learning experience?
    c. Can you tell me about a negative experience you have had as a singing student and why it may have been so?
    d. Tell me about some experiences you had with your first singing teacher. (prompts below)
        i. Where did you have singing lessons?
        ii. What was it like having lessons at….?
        iii. What was your relationship with your teacher at…?
        iv. What sort of things did you learn with your teacher?
    e. Do you play an instrument? (prompts below)
        i. Do you think singing is different from playing an instrument?
        ii. How do think it is different?
        iii. Do you think there is a difference between instrumentalists and singers in personality types?
    f. What do you think makes a good singer?

3. *Life and current circumstances impacting on singing*
    a. What were your expectations coming to university?
        i. Have your expectations been met? Why or why not?

    b. Tell me about the music course you are doing? (prompts below)
- i. What are some of the general music activities you undertake in your course?
- ii. What are some of the singing activities you undertake in your course?
- iii. What commitment do they require?
- iv. Are there any activities you would like to see that your uni course doesn't offer you?
- v. Are there any singing activities in your course that you see as a waste and of no value? Why?

    c. What are some of the differences you've experienced between your first year at university and now?

    d. Do you have a good group of friends to hang around with? (prompts below)
- i. Do they also do singing?
- ii. Are they supportive of you and your singing?

    e. How are singers treated at uni?

    f. Are singers treated differently to instrumental players?
- i. In what way?

    g. Do you feel you are supported in your uni course by the university staff and admin? Why or why not?

    h. What's going on in your life outside uni? (prompts below)
- i. Friends
- ii. Family
- iii. Work
- iv. Other

    i. Do you take part in singing activities outside of uni? What are they? (prompts below)
- i. Do they impact on how you feel about your singing?
- ii. Do they impact on your singing generally in a good or a bad way? (tiredness, enjoyment, sing better)

    j. Does your singing teacher know about these activities? Do they encourage them?

    k. What are your long term goals?

4. *Practices of singing*

    a. Do you have a practice routine? (prompts below)
- i. What form does it take?
- ii. How much practice would you do per day?
- iii. Per week?
- iv. What do you think about the amount of practice you do as a singer?
- v. How is your practice going?
- vi. What progress do you think you have made in your singing thus far?
- vii. How do you feel about the quality of your singing at the moment?
- viii. Is there anything you are doing that needs improvement?

    b. How do you feel when you sing?

    c. How do you feel when you sing with others?

    d. How would you describe your relationship with your current teacher?
- i. How do you think this affects your singing?

    e. Have you had feedback on your singing? (prompts below)
- i. Was it negative or positive?
- ii. How did you feel about this feedback?

Email questions

1. *The current lesson series*

    a. What are some songs you are learning in your lessons?

    b. Can you describe the structure of your typical singing lesson?

    c. Can you describe some of the vocal techniques you have learnt this semester?

    d. How does your teacher teach these techniques to you?

    e. What (if any) changes are going on in your vocal technique at the moment?

    f. Can you describe your relationship with your teacher?

    g. How much practice are you doing in preparation for your lessons every week?

2. *Life and current circumstances impacting on singing practices*

    a. Can you describe your general state of vocal health at present?

b. What events (if any) are impacting on your singing at the moment?

c. Are you currently involved in any other singing activities apart from your lessons? What are they?

Interview Two

These are prompt questions.

1. *Lesson series*
   a. How did your singing go this semester?
   b. How would you describe your relationship with your singing teacher at the moment?
   c. What are some of the things you learned during your lessons this semester?
   d. Is there anything you learned that you didn't know before?
   e. Is there anything your teacher taught that was different to other ways they have taught you?
   f. Were there any things you didn't understand during the lessons?
   g. Did you get frustrated at all during this semester with your singing? Why?
   h. How did your practice go this semester?
   i. Did you achieve everything you wanted to achieve?
   j. How did your exams go?
   k. Did the videoing have an impact on your lessons?
   l. Did it alter the way you worked with your teacher?
   m. Have the questions and interviews changed the way you view singing lessons?

2. *Life and influences*
   a. Did you feel supported in your singing by others this semester?
   b. Did you have any health issues that made it hard to sing?
   c. Were there any events that impacted on your singing lessons?

3. *The video:*
   Questions will be asked in conjunction with video prompts. Examples of questions are below.

   a. I'm going to show you some excerpts from the video and I'd like you to take a look at them and we'll have a chat about what's going on in the excerpt.
   b. What is going on there? (show excerpt)
   c. Why do you think that is?
   d. How was it resolved?
   e. How did you respond?
   f. Discussion time (prompts below)
      i. Communication and Rapport
      ii. Vocal techniques
      iii. Pedagogy
      iv. Content
      v. Musicianship
      vi. Interpretation

4. *Future plans*
   a. What do you plan to do after you finish uni?
   b. What are you currently working on?
   c. Tell me about the competition circuit?
   d. How do you see your future?

Interview: Former Singing student

Interview questions

Topics: these headers are for the interviewer's planning and will not necessarily be revealed to the interviewee.

1. *History and experience*
   a. Describe some of your earliest recollections of music and learning music.
   b. Can you tell me a little about your family life – growing up, was there music in the house, did your parents support your singing and music making?

    c.   Who were some of your key influences? What role did they play, and to what extent?
    d.   What role did your family/parents played in the decisions you have made about singing?
    e.   When did you know you were going to become a singer?
    f.   What have you done in singing and performance since going to uni?
    g.   Do you have any long term goals in singing?

2. *Beliefs and values* regarding learning to sing, including strengths, weaknesses and preferred styles
    a.   What is the most important aspect of your singing lessons?
    b.   Can you tell me about an experience you had as a singing student that was a positive learning experience?
    c.   Can you tell me about a negative experience you had as a singing student and why it may have been so?
    d.   Do you play an instrument? (prompts below)
        i.   Do you think singing is different from playing an instrument?
        ii.   How do think it is different?
    e.   Are singers treated differently to instrumental players?
        i.   Do you think there is a difference between instrumentalists and singers in personality types?
        ii.   In what way?
    f.   What do you think makes a good singer?

3. *Lessons with the former singing teacher*
    d.   Tell me about some experiences you had with your former singing teacher. (prompts below)
        i.   What was your relationship with your teacher at…?
        ii.   What sort of things did you learn with your teacher?
    e.   What were some songs you learnt in your lessons?
    f.   Can you describe the structure of your typical singing lesson?
    g.   Can you describe some of the vocal techniques you learnt with your teacher?
    h.   How did your teacher teach these techniques to you?
    i.   What (if any) changes happened in your vocal technique as a result of working with your teacher?
        e.   How much practice did you do in preparation for your lessons every week?
        f.   Was there anything you didn't understand during the lessons?
        g.   Did you get frustrated at all during your singing lessons? Why?
        h.   Can you tell me about some of the group activities you took part in? (prompts below)
            i.   Master class
            ii.   Prac classes
            iii.   Language and other
            iv.   Stage craft
    i.   Discussion time (prompts below)
        i.   Communication and Rapport
        ii.   Vocal techniques
        iii.   Pedagogy
        iv.   Content
        v.   Musicianship
        vi.   Interpretation

4. *Life and current circumstances impacting on singing*
    a.   What were your expectations going to university?
    j.   Were your expectations met? Why or why not?
        i.   Did you achieve everything you wanted to achieve in your singing at uni?
        ii.   Do you feel you were supported in your uni course by the university staff and admin? Why or why not?
        iii.   How are singers treated at uni?
    b.   Did you take part in singing activities outside of uni? What were they? (prompts below)
        i.   Did they impact on how you feel about your singing?

ii. Did they impact on your singing generally in a good or a bad way? (tiredness, enjoyment, sing better)
  c. Did your singing teacher know about these activities? Did they encourage them?

5. *Current practices of singing*
  a. Do you have a practice routine? (prompts below)
      i. What form does it take?
      ii. How much practice would you do per day?
      iii. Per week?
      iv. What do you think about the amount of practice you do as a singer?
      v. How is your practice going?
      vi. What progress do you think you have made in your singing thus far?
      vii. How do you feel about the quality of your singing at the moment?
      viii. Is there anything you are doing that needs improvement?
  b. How do you feel when you sing?
  c. How do you feel when you sing with others?
  d. Have you had feedback on your singing? (prompts below)
      i. Was it negative or positive?
      ii. How did you feel about this feedback?