

## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I have had several wonderful teachers in my life and have distilled the best of what they had to offer in my own teaching. After over 25 years of teaching and an international singing career, I have amassed a substantial amount of valuable information for singers.

First and foremost, I understand the responsibility given to me by each singer walking into my studio. In the first few lessons, I learn as much as I can about the singer. I try to understand their learning style, their needs, and the language of singing that they use. I try to adapt my language and style to each individual singer's needs and operate intuitively to guide them in their artistic journey.

I have worked with all voice types and all age levels. This has given me a lot of great experience in choosing repertoire, developing a voice from the ground up, and dealing with specific vocal pathologies.

There are two aspects of singing that I particularly concentrate on. One is the source of the voice itself, the breath. Breath management is the single most important aspect of singing and is particularly vulnerable to misinterpretation. I generally find that most people over-support, emphasizing pressure and muscle rather than understanding the way air is used in the voice. To facilitate this understanding, I often use the model of speech and observation natural wildlife around us. In our daily lives, we phonate all day long using perfectly balanced air, creating a consistent sound with great variation in color and tone and completely under our control. When we begin a sentence, we do not run out of the air. When we breathe to speak, we use a subtle, internal and buoyant connection to our breath. While singing is different from speech in its volume and duration, it is still relatable to speech in terms of breath use. The second aspect of singing that I emphasize is the placement of the tone. I think spatially in the way I conceive of and describe singing. I find that identifying and refining a concept of the sensation and relative location of the sound is helpful. I help the singer develop this description based on the singer's own conceptual style and vocabulary. Above all, I emphasize balance in all aspects of singing, not only in the instrument that creates it but in the life that supports that instrument.