

## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

It is paramount as a teacher to be able create an environment that encourages trust, positive interaction, active engagement in learning, self-motivation, and self-reflection from each participant. An artist's voice is an incredibly personal instrument, constantly evolving as the primary communicator of a person's thoughts, emotions, questions, etc. It is crucial to understand that even the most well-intentioned course of action in identifying or fixing vocal faults could be felt as an attack on a student's sense of belonging or as an intrusion into private part of their identity. Additionally, the use of culture-conscience repertoire and unflinching support of marginalized and underrepresented communities is critical to providing paths to equity in training and a means towards introducing varied perspectives and musical genres to one's students.

The process of self-reflection is critical to the individual growth of my students and the evolution of my teaching as well. One of my primary duties as a teacher is to recognize that a well-structured lesson may still only provide but motivation and tools for a student to apply in their practice, a process which is without my direct feedback during the week. It is therefore crucial to not only provide students instruction on how to approach fixing issues in their mechanism and creative process, but also how to identify areas of improvement in real-time, non-studio settings. Learning how aid the development of a student's ear, self-vocal analysis and self-learning techniques is a critical part of undergraduate studio goals. I also realize that it is important to reflect, assess, and identify what has not worked through self-critique of one's teaching strategies...and through opportunities such as this program which allows for observation, guidance, and support in adjusting the paradigm for studio voice.

In this changing and diversifying world, it is my duty as an educator to modify my instruction based on the individual student. In the area of applied voice instruction not only does this mean having the versatility to adjust my teaching (for example to what degree I use visual, kinesthetic, and voiced scientific exercises to approach a vocal issue) based on the strengths of an individual's learning style, but it also means recognizing some of the strengths or hurdles students of different backgrounds may be coming in with, and how they may relate to ease of vocal growth or schoolwork. It is my hope that this program would lend me more tools in this regard, as well as a network of experts doing similar work in research, creativity and teaching around the world.

Teaching is an ever-evolving process which constantly requires one to be flexible in all areas of life. Teaching is a very intimate process, as human interaction and the development and strengthening of skills and community-ties encourages students and teachers alike to be themselves and to find security in that sense of self. I teach music because I understand that the world is in need of people capable of expressing and understanding the intricacies of the human condition, and that the tools musicians develop can truly be used to improve the betterment of a vast number of members of this society. This has found me currently occupying space on faculty of one of the top 10 music theatre programs in the nation, next year it could find me back in a more classically oriented faculty job, or finding opportunities in vocal coaching or collaborative piano: every connection I make and person I interact with in making music holds equal value in my mind and memory regardless of genre...and I hope to continue to search out pedagogical learning opportunities so my experience can grow in what it can offer to incoming students.