

The Harmonizer

BRINGING BARBERSHOP HARMONY TO LIFE • MARCH/APRIL 2023



HARMONY UNIVERSITY

Improve your voice, your chapter, and your directing and coaching skills,
as some of barbershop's best take over this edition of The Harmonizer



NOTEWORTHY

GAME SHOW BARBERSHOPPERS
MIKE ROWE SINGS FOUR PARTS

TIP SHEET

CARING FOR YOUR VOICE:
15 VOCAL HEALTH MYTHS

INSIDE

A TRULY INTERNATIONAL CHORUS
CONTEST IN LOUISVILLE



LOUISVILLE

2023 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

JULY 2 - 9, 2023

A WORLD OF REASONS NOT TO MISS IT



"PRAISE THE CHORD!" is still being uttered in barbershop circles to this day, thanks to Pastor Hannes Kor traveling all the way from Sweden to perform for us in Charlotte. What new memories from groups all over the world awaits us in Louisville?



Speaking of world, choruses from five nations, including New Zealand's Pacific Connection (pictured), will be competing for the gold. The greatest show on earth keeps getting bigger, and as always it's one you simply cannot miss!



The Festival is back! Come watch quartets and choruses perform for the pure joy of barbershop that ends with Festival champs and standing ovations. Anyone can perform, so if you're interested, sign up today!



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Mon
July 3

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July 4

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July 5

Thu
July 6

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July 7

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July 8

Registration
and Harmony
Marketplace



Education
in Louisville

Quartet
Quarterfinals
Session 1

Quartet
Quarterfinals
Session 2

Opening Night
Party



Education
in Louisville

Quartet
Quarterfinals
Session 3

NextGen Varsity
Quartet and
Chorus Invitational

Afterglow

2nd Annual
International
Quartet and
Chorus Festival

MegaSing

Gold Medal Hours:
Quorum and Music
City Chorus

Quartet
Semifinals

Late Night
Showcase

Chorus Contest
Session 1

Chorus Contest
Session 2

Association of
International
Champions Show

After Party

Chorus Contest
Session 3

Quartet Finals
and Finale

Chordatorium

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NextGen Varsity Festival



Chorus Festival

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MARCH/APRIL 2023 • VOLUME LXXXIII • NUMBER 2



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SWEET PEA

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD

BLUE SHADOWS ON THE TRAIL

(THEY LONG TO BE) CLOSE TO YOU

HAPPY TOGETHER

GOD BLESS AMERICA

SINCE I DON'T HAVE YOU

AND MANY, MANY MORE
SHOP.BARBERSHOP.ORG



The Harmonizer

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Lorin May

OUR VISION

Everyone in Harmony

OUR MISSION

To bring people together in harmony and fellowship
to enrich lives through singing.

OUR PURPOSES

To perpetuate the old American institution:
the barbershop quartet and barbershop harmony

To promote appreciation of barbershop harmony

To initiate and maintain a broad program
of musical education, contests, and appreciation
in support of barbershop harmony and
the allied arts

To establish and maintain foundations that
support our vision

To initiate, promote and participate in charitable
projects that support our vision

The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement
of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc. (DBA
Barbershop Harmony Society) is a
non-profit organization operating in
the United States and Canada.

March/April 2023

Volume LXXXIII Number 2

Complete contact info: pages 30-31

The Harmonizer (ISSN 0017-7849) (USPS 577700) is published bimonthly by the
Barbershop Harmony Society, 110 7th Ave N, Nashville TN 37203-3704.

Periodicals Postage Paid at Nashville TN and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

The Harmonizer, 110 7th Ave N, Nashville TN 37203-3704

Advertising rates available upon request at harmonizer@barbershop.org.
Publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts or artwork.

Postmaster: Send address changes to editorial offices of *The Harmonizer*,
110 7th Ave N, Nashville TN 37203-3704 at least 30 days before the next publication
date. (Publications Agreement No. 40886012. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses
to: Station A, PO Box 54, Windsor ON N9A 6J5. Email: cpreturns@wdsmail.com)

A portion of each member's dues is allocated to cover the magazine's subscription
price. Subscription price to non-members is \$30 yearly; foreign subscriptions are
\$35 yearly or \$7 per issue (U.S. funds only).

© 2023 The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop
Quartet Singing in America, Inc. dba The Barbershop Harmony Society.

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In praise of thinking small

We probably don't go to rehearsals or on stage thinking, "We're going to change someone's life tonight." And yet, that's exactly what happens. In hindsight, we might realize that the small things we do are actually big things.



Marty



John

BRIAN LYNCH: More than grand, overarching ideas, life is a trillion trillion tiny choices made by people every day. As long-time Barbershoppers, you've probably had many little moments that stay with you as much as the big, sweeping moments on stage, in the life of the Society, and so on.

MARTY: The first to come to mind for me is an image of myself as a little ankle-grabber kid, sitting by a wheelbarrow of wood at a campground where my dad's quartet would rehearse on a weekend as a retreat. They'd go perform for all the campers just to share some fun with all those people there. Big show? No ... but everyone around there felt a little brighter that day.

JOHN: Barbershop for many of us did not start out as an overriding, important element of our lives. I got involved in barbershop while dating a woman in my first year of college. Her father was a Barbershopper, and on our third or fourth date, she said, "How would you like to go to a concert?" I asked what kind of concert, thinking it's like **The Temptations** or whatever (this is 1972, you know.) Turns out it's a barbershop show, the **Montclair Chorus**, fourth place bronze medalists at the time, and the guest quartet was the **Suntones** (1961 champion). And they were great, of course!

MARTY: The Suntones probably didn't walk out on stage thinking, "We're going to change somebody's

life tonight." They're just ready to sing a great gig, have a good time. And you're in the audience thinking, "Well, I don't know what this show will be, but at least I get to sit next to this gal for three hours."

JOHN: It took me four years to join, because I didn't do it until after I got my master's degree, but that first impression never went away. When I went back four years later, everybody was still just as friendly—even the father of the girl I was no longer dating!

THAT OPENNESS TO EACH OTHER, THAT POSITIVE EMOTIONAL STATE, TRANSFERS TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS. HENCE, "WE COME FOR THE MUSIC, WE STAY FOR THE FRIENDSHIPS."

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Society Board of Directors societyboard@barbershop.org



MARTY: No one starts out expecting to change lives. They just do the things they do. It's like being at an afterglow, and one person who's just coming in asks to sing a tag. Inside, you're thinking, man, it's getting late, I really need to get home, but it's one small thing to share a little joy, okay, yeah, let's do it.

We've got a big picture vision of what singing together can mean for the broad common good of humanity, but it's really just these little things, added and multiplied. Lots of individuals, lots of distinctive individuality, trying to broaden our circle of inclusion for people of all backgrounds.

JOHN: There's this openness to reaching out to other people in the instant that is baked into our culture.

MARTY: A quick tag—a quick success!—a quick connection!

JOHN: Improvised ear harmony trains us as singers to be in a mindset of readiness. We react to the notes we hear—ideally expecting the best from everyone else, and adding our own best. We're always assuming everyone is working toward the common good—that magnificent chord! That openness to each other, that positive emotional state, transfers to our relationships. Hence, “we come for the music, we stay for the friendships.”

MARTY: As a chorus director, John, think about all those small, little, quick decisions you're making instantaneously in front of a chorus that can change the attitude of that rehearsal in a moment's notice. Sometimes, everyone's just so perfectly locked in together the director can do something completely different and new. And the chorus stays perfectly in sync, in one mind, because they're all wide open musically, artistically, emotionally.

JOHN: Rehearsal is not to make you repeat everything by rote, but rather to make the muscle memory such

“TINY BITS OF PERSONAL INTERACTION ACROSS GENERATIONS THAT TURN YOUNG PEOPLE INTO ADULTS BECAUSE OF THE GIVING OPENNESS THAT WE HAVE THERE.”

that no matter what happens, you're ready to allow all your skills and commitment to flower.

BRIAN: It's interesting that these same attitudes of giving and openness apply so well in the intergenerational part of our culture. We're always seeing young people grow into maturity and ease in BHS because we treat them as grown-ups immediately. Young people come to the organization, and they're treated as peers, with the same respect, demands, rewards. It's a small thing, but it's a *huge* thing.

JOHN: Tiny bits of personal interaction across generations that turn young people into adults in our culture, but it's not because we had a formal program of kindness, it is simply innate to the giving openness that we have there.

MARTY: When my son comes with me to **Music City Chorus**, he doesn't hang out exclusively with the 18-year-olds. In his first quartet experience at the **Nashville Chapter**, we learned a tag, and he sang with a 70-year-old, two 50-year-olds and a 19-year-old. A tiny moment; a big moment.

JOHN: A barbershop moment. ■



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John & Marty are attending

Mar 1, Strategic Planning Committee meeting

Mar 7, Chapter St. Patrick's Day Irish quartet contest (John)

Mar 8, Music Medics (Marty)

Mar 10-11, NSC Spring Convention (Marty)

Mar 17-18, SUN Spring Convention (Marty)

Mar 24-25, MAD Spring Convention (John)

Mar 24-25, JAD/CAR Spring Convention (Marty) Apr 2, Chapter cabaret show, “Lasagna with Barbershop” (John)

Apr 5, Strategic Planning Committee meeting

Apr 12, Music Medics (Marty)

John & Marty are reading

Race for Relevance,
Coerver & Byers

John is learning

“The Cop on the Beat, the Man in the Moon and Me,” arr. Fred King

Marty is learning

“I'd Love to Live in Loveland,”
W.R. Williams



● 2023 LOUISVILLE

International really means international for 2023 contests

Overseas choruses will bring impressive artistry and big scores to the big show



Above: Pacific Connection (BHNZ), Wellington, NZ • Meantime Chorus (BABS) Central London, UK • Northern Stars (SNOBS), Stockholm, Sweden • Stockholm City Voices (SNOBS) Sweden • Heavy Medal Chorus (BinGI), Germany

Last year's International Convention was a fantastic reunion, even if a lot of non-American Barbershoppers decided to wait until Louisville. And now we'll watch choruses from around the globe recharge the International Chorus Contest, and the quality has never been higher.

We'll be seeing 10 choruses make their International debut in Louisville, including five from outside North America. Of those five, four qualified with scores in the top 10.

Not that the "domestic" product is short on talent, mind you. The entire 36-chorus field comprises every combination imaginable. Choruses that might once have been characterized as "youth groups" are contending at the same level as long-established multi-appearance veterans.

ALL IN VIBRANT DOWNTOWN LOUISVILLE

In the middle of everything. Who lives within a day's drive from Louisville? More than half of us! Everyone from Toronto to Pensacola, from Minneapolis to New York.

One-of-a-kind destination. In a modernized and vibrant downtown, enjoy the Urban Bourbon Experience, Louisville Slugger Museum, Muhammad Ali Center, riverboat cruises, and more bars and restaurants than you can count. Churchill Downs is only five miles south of downtown.

2023 INTERNATIONAL CHORUS CONTEST

FRIDAY, JULY 7

1. Heart of Carolina A Cappella (NSC)
2. Stockholm City Voices (SNOBS)
3. Southern Gateway Chorus (JAD)
4. Saltaires (RMD)
5. Voices of Gotham (MAD)
6. SmorgasChorus (CSD)
7. Vocal Summit (EVG)
8. Central Standard (CSD)
9. Great Lakes Chorus (PIO)
10. The Men of Independence (JAD)
11. Parkside Harmony (MAD)
12. Heavy Medal Chorus (BinGI)
13. Fog City Singers (FWD)
14. East Coast Sound (MAD)
15. The Recruits (CSD)
16. Midwest Vocal Express (LOL)
17. Sound of the Rockies (RMD)
18. New Tradition (ILL)
19. Singing Buckeyes (JAD)
20. Heralds of Harmony (SUN)
21. Circle City Sound (CAR)

SATURDAY, JULY 8

23. PDX Voices (EVG)
 24. Fog City Harmonia (FWD)
 25. The Pine Barons (MAD)
 26. Parkside Melody (MAD)
 27. City Lights (PIO)
 28. Harbortown Sound (ONT)
 29. Meantime Chorus (BABS)
 30. Pacific Connection (BHNZ)
 31. Ambassadors of Harmony (CSD)
 32. Vocal Revolution (NED)
 33. Sound of Tennessee (DIX)
 34. Northern Stars (SNOBS)
 35. Sound by Southwest (SWD)
 36. Forward Harmony (LOL)
- Music City Chorus Swan Song



LEARN MORE AND REGISTER For registrations, hotels, and to stay up to date on the latest news about the 2023 International Convention, go to barbershop.org/louisville.

Headquarters building to be sold

Plans are to relocate headquarters to elsewhere in Nashville; enormous jump in value to benefit barbershop singers long-term

Taking advantage of Nashville's status as the hottest real estate market in the nation, the BHS Board of Directors is listing its headquarters building for sale.

The 37,000-square-foot building was purchased in 2006 for \$1.45 million; its value today is substantially higher. It is one of the last remaining zoned high-rise properties in Nashville's coveted central core.

"When we purchased the building, we saw it as the acquisition of an asset for the Society in a good real estate market—the right place at the right time," said Alan Lamson, who leads a task force supervising and directing the sale on behalf of the Society Board. "The market has exceeded our expecta-



tions, and the day to take advantage of that is here," Lamson said.

The sales process is expected to take about a year. Tennessee is one of the fastest growing states in the country, and Nashville's reign as the top U.S. real estate market is in its second year.

"Nashville is setting real estate records on a number of fronts," BHS Board President John Santora said. "This is an opportunity most organiza-

tions never see. It's an opportunity that won't wait."

Proceeds from the sale will be carefully invested in order to benefit barbershop singing communities for the long term, Santora said.

"This isn't about an infusion of cash today, this year or next year," Santora said. "This is a strategic decision that will support barbershop singers for decades to come." The Society Board will finalize details about proceed investments and use once the sale is complete.

The task force plans to explore other spaces in the Greater Nashville area to accommodate staff, the Society's music library and archives, including recordings, and barbershop memorabilia.

● INTERCHAPTER COLLABORATION

SEVEN ILLINOIS CHAPTERS COMBINE FOR CHRISTMAS SHOW

For the second year in a row, barbershop ensembles in the Chicago area and northern Illinois developed a Christmas program that engaged multiple choruses and quartets. The effort came in part to help small BHS chapters who struggled to recover their singers and their finances post pandemic.

Over two weekends this past December, members representing seven chapters and a handful of quartets and ensembles performed two sold-out shows. Approximately 80 singers performed in Baker Memorial United Methodist Church in St. Charles and the Barrows Auditorium on the campus of Wheaton College.

Not only were voices combined, but all aspects, including multi-pronged media marketing and ticket sales efforts, were coordinated by a committee with members from multiple chapters. The proceeds from nearly 700 tickets were apportioned to each of the chapters involved using an algorithm based on ticket sales and member participation in rehearsals and other activities—a much-needed infusion for some depleted treasuries.



● LIFETIME OF HARMONY



TOPEKA HONORS 70-YEAR CHAPTER MEMBER

At 94 years old, Don Kready has been flying since 1955 and started harmonizing years before that. The Topeka, KS Chapter took time out during a January meeting to honor their longest-serving and still very active member. We can all hope to hit the same milestone!



NOTEWORTHY

The latest in the world of barbershop

● COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Delivering for Calgary's poor

Members of **Acappella Road** presented a donation to the Calgary Food Bank of \$8,300 on behalf of the Calgary barbershop singing community, representing the proceeds from the December 17, 2022 Tinsel and Tunes concert hosted by Acappella Road. Other choruses and quartets that participated included **Pitch Please**, **Rhythm of the Rockies**, **Chinook Winds Show Chorus**, **Stampede City Chorus**, **Alberta Gold**, and quartets **Alloy**, **Zenergy**, **Lovin' Tuneful**, **Sound Advice**, **Wicked Pitch of the West** and **Collage**. It was a heartwarming celebration of the season.

● NO LEAP OF FAITH

DELIVERING A RIBBITING PERFORMANCE

Bob Bernard has always wanted to share his love of barbershop with his 21 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren, but faced one barrier. Few ensembles—his own quartet included—have repertoire that kids can enjoy as much as the adults. He was looking for the perfect quartet for a family reunion, where he wanted his family to not only see his quartet perform but connect all ages to barbershop harmony. At the Fall 2022 Northeastern District Convention, he found what he was looking for when past NED champ and 2022 International competitor **Daily Special** literally bounded onto the stage in their frog outfits.



The quartet was quickly hired and came to the reunion dressed appropriately, performing "My Shiny Teeth and Me," "The Cheeseburger Song," "Buttered Noodles," and "The Climb." As we say in the South, Bob's family thought the performance was finer than a frog hair split four ways!



NICK GORDON'S LATEST WINNING PERFORMANCE

You know Nick Gordon as the vocal chameleon tenor of 2022 International Silver Medalist **Midtown**. But *Family Feud* fans know him as the guy who (1) sang a duet with his wife, Gabrielle, and (2) as the man who earned the evening's biggest cheers for his non-riqué delivery of an answer you'd probably never say with kids in the room. (But which couldn't be avoided if he wanted his family to win.) The relevant part of the Feb. 2 episode is online; just know in advance that the *Family Feud* stage is no G-rated BHS stage, and yes, Nick's family won and returned the next night! ■



What's Happening

2023 International Louisville ▶ July 2-9, 2023

The party continues in a newly vibrant downtown setting with great amenities and venues.



Harmony University ▶ July 23-30, 2023 New Orleans

Back at Loyola for the second year!
barbershop.org/hu



◀ 2024 Midwinter New York City January 9-14

2024 International Cleveland
June 30-July 7

2025 International Denver
June 29-July 6

SO MUCH. SHEET MUSIC.

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TOP CHARTS

TTBB	ARRANGER
1 The Bells of Notre Dame w/Out There	A. Dale
2 When I'm Sixty-Four	Gentry
3 The Longest Time	Gentry
4 You've Got A Friend in Me	Wessler
5 Go the Distance	A. Dale

SSAA	ARRANGER
1 I'm Into Something Good/Happy Together	A. Dale
2 Come Fly With Me	Keller
3 Deed I Do	A. Dale
4 Seven Bridges Road	Johnson
5 Somebody To Love	A. Dale

SATB	ARRANGER
1 Africa	Morris
2 You've Got A Friend in Me	Wessler
3 Seven Bridges Road	Johnson
4 A Whole New World	Hicks
5 Hooked On A Feeling	Nicholas



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TIP SHEET

Peter Cunningham, Singing judge, lead of 2014 Youth champ The Academy
✉ pbcunningham824@gmail.com

● HARMONY UNIVERSITY

Caring for your voice: Addressing 15 vocal health myths

You've heard a lot of advice about what does and does not affect your voice, and a lot of it is grounded in misunderstandings about the human body

Good vocal health advice is often mixed with myths. Here are 15 vocal myths and the facts you ought to know.

HYDRATION

Myth 1. "You should drink 8 cups of water every day."

Fact: 8 cups (64 oz. or ~1.9L) is a good benchmark, but everyone has different needs. Drink enough water that you never feel thirsty or dry, and your urine is clear or very nearly clear. That may be more or less than 8 cups depending on many factors including diet and caffeine intake. *Note: Riboflavin, or vitamin B2, can cause bright yellow urine when had in excess.*

Myth 2. "When you drink, the liquid flows over your vocal folds, coating and moistening them."

Fact: Liquids are blocked from contacting our vocal folds by the epiglottis. The main benefit of drinking fluids is to hydrate the entire body, which helps secrete appropriately thin mucus and maintains the appropriate internal viscosity of the vocal folds.

Myth 3. "Drink room temperature water—cold water tightens your laryngeal muscles and freezes your vocal folds."

Fact: Again, water does not directly contact your vocal folds, so by the time water reaches your larynx, it



is body temperature. Drink fluids at a temperature you enjoy so that you drink more regularly!

Myth 4. "The only way to hydrate is to drink water regularly throughout the day."

Fact: You can also promote topical hydration by inhaling steam from a pot of simmering hot water, a hot shower, or a humidifier. Additionally, chewing gum or sucking on hard candies encourages the production of saliva and relieves the feeling of dry mouth. *Note: Avoid gum/cough drops with menthol (see Myth #8). And don't overdo chewing gum—your temporomandibular joint will thank you!*

DIET

Myth 5. "You can drink as much soda or coffee as you want without affecting your voice."

Fact: Caffeine is a diuretic that increases urine output, which can contribute to dehydration. Caffeine and carbonation also increases the risk of acid reflux. These beverages can be safely consumed in moderation at least three hours before sleeping and paired with increased water intake.

Myth 6. "Singers cannot have milk or other dairy products."

Fact: Dairy can lead to thicker saliva secretions for some, but not everyone. Dairy shouldn't get in the

way of your vocalizing if you avoid it the hour before singing and drink plenty of water.

Myth 7. “Spicy, acidic, fried, and fatty foods cannot harm your voice.”

Fact: These foods can increase stomach acid production and the risk for acid reflux, which inflames the vocal folds. Have these in moderation at least three hours before going to sleep, and avoid on days of extra-long rehearsals or performances. Alcohol, coffee, and some medications such as aspirin can also increase your risk of acid reflux.

MEDICINES

Myth 8. “Cough drops have a healing effect on the voice, and can be used before, during, and after singing.”

Fact: *Never* sing with something in your mouth that could accidentally be inhaled! Most cough drops also use menthol, which can cause irritation in larger doses, and its numbing effect can lead to vocal overuse. Instead, look for menthol-free cough drops or sugar-free hard candies, which will have a similar effect on saliva production without the side effects.

Myth 9. “Prescription medicines rarely have adverse effects on the voice.”

Fact: Common side effects in many prescription medications—especially dry mouth, dizziness, and sedation—can influence your ability to feel and perform your best. Be sure your doctors know that you are a vocalist. When possible, have a trial period for any new medication. On a non-performance day, sing 30–45 minutes after ingesting. Start with the smallest dosage available (it may be labeled pediatric) and increase until the desired effect is reached, paying attention to how it also affects your singing voice.

“COMMON SIDE EFFECTS IN MANY PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS CAN INFLUENCE YOUR ABILITY TO FEEL AND PERFORM YOUR BEST.”

Here’s a fantastic resource from the University of Iowa to check for side effects that affect the voice:

tinyurl.com/voicexr

Note: Only use medications prescribed to you by a qualified doctor, and only in their prescribed dosages.

VOCAL HABITS

Myth 10. “You should never cough if you can help it!”

Fact: Coughing is a defensive reflex that clears the airway, helping prevent lung infections. If you have a cough, avoid vocalizing and get enough vocal rest to recover. Excessive throat-clearing, on the other hand, moves rather than removes mucus on vocal folds, leading you to want to clear your throat again. Avoid this vicious circle of vocal abuse. If you feel the need to clear your throat, gently hum or lip trill, sliding through your range to vibrate any mucus on the folds loose, and then take a sip of water.

Myth 11. “If your technique is good, you won’t get fatigued when singing.”

Fact: Good technique lets you sing more efficiently and fatigue less quickly, but everyone has a safe singing limit. For every hour of voice use, you need about 10 minutes of vocal rest.

Myth 12. “Whispering is a good way to rest your voice and recover when vocally fatigued.”

Fact: Whispering can put as much strain on the voice as yelling or screaming. Vocal rest means no talking or singing of any kind. The more severe the fatigue, the longer the vocal rest.

HABILITATION

Myth 13. “After a long rehearsal or performance, the best way to start vocal recovery process is to immediately stop speaking or singing.”

Fact: Similar to physical exercise, a vocal cool-down has been shown to have immense benefits after long and high-intensity singing. A cool-down can be just five minutes of gentle exercises that encourage the voice to relax and return to normal speech levels of pitch and intensity. This speeds recovery and increases overall vocal well-being.

Myth 14. “The best remedy for when my voice is tired or hoarse is to [fill in the blank with whichever tea, throat lozenge, or other magical cure you use].”

Fact: Drinking water and vocal rest are the best remedies for a tired or hoarse voice. Steam inhalation can also help. When you’re ready to start singing again, start with gentle vocalization (semi-occluded vocal tract: hum, lip trill, raspberry, tongue trill, straw singing).

Myth 15. “Once your voice begins to age or you experience any sort of vocal injury, there is no way to strengthen or habilitate the voice.”

Fact: Daily vocal exercises will strengthen your voice, and voice therapy may habilitate some cases of vocal atrophy (aging) or voice injuries. In extreme cases, vocal surgery can remove growths on the vocal folds. Consider seeing an otolaryngologist who specializes in laryngology for a basic examination. ■

TAKEOVER EDITION



Harmony University takes over *The Harmonizer*

Welcome to another HU Takeover Issue of *The Harmonizer*! This annual residency provides opportunities for your favorite HU faculty members (and maybe some you don't know yet!) to share what they are most passionate about right now. In this issue, there are articles on coaching, directing, singing, leadership, administration, singing, and more! This issue is topical and timely, providing you with news you can use. I truly hope you enjoy reading as much as I had helping put it together! Full confession: I hope these articles kindle the flame you have for barbershop learning and inspire you to sign up for HU. We'll save a seat and a tag for you. See you in July in New Orleans!

– Steve Scott, BHS Director of Harmony University & Education Services



HU: like an inverted week at International

You will have a great time investing in yourself and your ensemble during a week in which you'll spend little time "watching" and most of your time "doing"

If you attend International like I do, consider how much of your time is spent as an active participant. If you compete, you spend hours in coaching and rehearsal in the months and hours leading up to the contest for your minutes on the stage, or performing at chorditoriums and afterglows.

And even when we avail ourselves of HU mini-sessions, gatherings, Sing With the Champs, stopping in the inimitable Marketplace, plus lots of meet-and-greets and tagging around, your active participation will be much less than the (admittedly great) 20-30 hours spent watching our top groups.

What if you could flip the script and actively participate all day and late into the evening for an entire week—at an incredibly low cost? What if you could learn from, experience with, and share a song or a hundred tags with some of the top teachers, performers, and leaders in all of the barbershop universe? What a fantastic complement to the annual convention experience that would be!

For the hundreds of our harmony-loving friends, educators, and students who annually attend Harmony University, the experience is truly unparalleled. Participants can elect to attend sessions from 8 am to 10 pm, can learn arranging, improve



their singing chops, study the history of barbershopping, sing tags for hours, participate in performances, learn about and receive coaching, and explore leadership strategies, network with singers from across the globe, have 1:1 dine-alongs with luminaries in the barberverse and so very much more. Classes are differentiated to meet the needs of diverse learners, and instructors are extremely well-prepared to deliver top-level learning opportunities.

HU established a new home in New Orleans in 2022. NOLA is at the epicenter of American music and played a critical role in the roots of barbershop as well. Our experiences

on campus at Loyola University, as well as excursions into NOLA, were unique and memorable. Hearing live jazz in its birthplace just adds to the richness of our musical lives. After HU 2022 the students and faculty provided the team with extremely valuable feedback, which has enabled the team to make substantial improvements to an already great school. In addition, we provided specific feedback to Loyola that will enable them to refine the setting for HU 2023.

Let's all make our reservations for the Louisville International Convention and at the same time, consider the flipped activity scenario of HU where you can actively learn, share, perform and sing, all day and well into the night! ■

HU Provost

To assist the growing need for curricular expansion and refinement, the HU team has appointed Dr. Jay Butterfield to the position of HU Provost. Jay will work closely with all of the HU college deans, helping them plan the courses for HU 2023 (and beyond!) as well with faculty selection. Jay will have an active role in the execution of HU during the week and will ensure the highest levels of quality for your barbershop education experience. Jay has years of experience as a public school music educator as well in administration, recently retiring as an urban Director of Schools. With his degrees in music, his years as a SNG judge, and curriculum planning experience, we couldn't think of anyone better suited to this position! Thanks, Jay!



Jay Butterfield is a 50-year BHS member who has a top 20 quartet pin & top five experience as chorus director/singer. He holds degrees in Voice/Choral Conducting, and a doctorate in Educational Leadership. jvbbbs1@gmail.com

3 powerful ways to improve your coaching success

A few small tweaks can help coaches better connect and correct

No matter your experience level, there are endless ways to add to your coaching toolkit and to improve your coaching structure. Here are some positive habits to help you develop as a coach and bring amazing results far more often.

REMOVE THE WORDS "I" AND "YOU" FROM ALL YOUR COACHING INSTRUCTIONS

Your choice of words can greatly affect the ability of singers to perform to their potential. Tame the part of your ego that wishes to show how good you are at uncovering mistakes or that you know your stuff. It sets up an us-versus-them feeling of separation in the room. Likewise, avoid using "I" and "you" in your instruction, e.g., "I want you to ..." or "You basses went flat at bar ..." Use more inclusive language such as "we" and "us." It might feel fake at first—especially when it isn't your ensemble—but you will be amazed at the way it helps singers relax and perform to their potential. For example:

- "What would it sound like if we were to free our tongues of any tension?"
- "Let's try that again, this time singing on an 'oh' vowel."
- "How about we always adopt the singer's stance when the pitch is blown."

START FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID OF VOCAL PREPARATION TO HELP ADDRESS SINGING ISSUES

A wonderful U.S. coach brought this concept to New Zealand back in the 1990s. I wish I could remember their

name to thank them—it formed the coaching backbone for me and many others for the next 30 years! I've adapted it to reflect recent practices.

As seen in the diagram below, the foundation layer in producing a free, open tone is *alignment*, or the singer's stance. (Just ask Rob Mance!) Building on alignment, we tackle *breath management* using good diaphragmatic breathing technique. (Just ask Steve Scott!) The next layer is *onset of tone*—how we use vocal fold closure to start our sound with a balanced onset that is neither breathy nor pressed. (Ask Nicky McGrath!) Sustaining the tone involves attention to accurate *vowel shapes and maximizing resonance*. Last, we address *artistic vocal diction* choices such as diphthongs and onomatopoeia.

Here's the key point: None of the stages will be successful if any of the previous layers are compromised in any way. For example, there could be any number of reasons you are hearing synchronization errors at the beginnings and endings of phrases: differences in diction choice or onset of tone between singers, poor breath management, or maybe alignment. The solution for each of these could be as simple as the director modeling good alignment. The pyramid model means that when you are not hearing a free and open tone, start at the bottom and work up!

PERFECT THE ART OF CLEAR AND CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

We've already addressed the importance of using positive and inclusive language when giving coaching instruction. The next step is to provide our singer or ensemble with feedback that is clear and

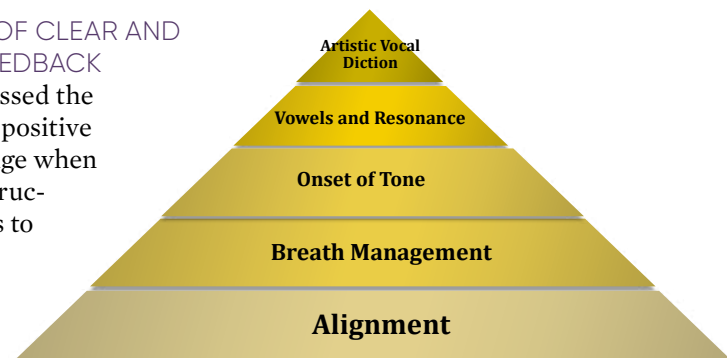
concise. Here are three techniques to keep in mind:

Work on (and give feedback on) only one thing at a time. If after a run-through you say, "Sing it again and I'll stop you when I hear something," the ensemble will sing defensively while waiting for their first mistake. That means tension, worry, anxiety, and nerves. If instead you say, "Wow, you sang with real passion and energy. Now let's sing just the intro using the word 'ma' on every note to tune every chord," the singers will still use passion and energy, but now have a specific job to concentrate on.

The next part is to give feedback only on that specific instruction. For example, "When we all concentrate on tuning each chord, we improve the expansion of sound. How about we put the words back in now using the same attention to tuning?" Don't be distracted by other "opportunities" (e.g. performance techniques) that the singers weren't thinking about.

Answer the who-what-why. When offering feedback, be clear about WHO did it, WHAT they did, and WHY it is important. For example:

"Morgan, when you sing with such a full rich bass sound, you produce a strong foundation for the rest of the



quartet to build on.”

“When this quartet agrees on the focal point to sing to, you are going to bring the audience on a journey with you that is more genuine.”

(Note that using “I” and “you” in positive feedback is quite okay! We love to hear how great we are doing: “I thought you were amazing!” or “You sang with such believability!” or “I LOVE what you did with the phrasing that time.”)

Make sure the instruction is concise—10 words or fewer! While

singers love to hear us rave with feedback about their great performance, it’s really important to be concise when giving instruction. Singers turn off very quickly and lose concentration when we coaches get the blah blahs. Minimize your instruction to maximize their singing time. Use instruction sentences of 10 words or fewer, then go for six! Then challenge yourself to use only gestures. (Ask Dr. Don Campbell!)

Try taking up one of the challenges at a time, and when they are a

permanent addition to your coaching toolkit, I invite you to reflect on how it has affected your coaching environment and your success. ■



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Planning an effective performance: a methodology

What if you could command the stage with absolute confidence? You were able to deliver a moving and captivating performance? You knew that you had the power to bring your audience to its feet?

A performer’s job is to bring the script/character/song to life through a wide range of presentation skills. The time it takes to develop these skills depends on both effort and innate talent. In barbershop culture, we have the added challenge that these skills are taught through technique-oriented approaches.

Outstanding performance is more of a communication process—transmitting a message from the performer to an audience. The performer’s goal is to amuse, engage, entertain, and evoke emotion through a performative experience with the resultant goal of creating believability. It’s “real living within a set of imaginary circumstances,” according to Sanford Meisner.

While there are many ways to approach this challenge, here is a system that’s been successful for me as a coach for all types of performers, genres, and skill levels.

FIVE-QUESTION METHODOLOGY

As communicators of the message of the song text, we must understand our role and purpose of the characters within the performance. First, we must analyze the text to get the performers all on the same page and to have them transmit the same emotions at the same time. To read the text like a story (without music), these five questions will help you understand the truth (real emotions) found within the text. The externals will then generally take care of themselves.

1. Who is there? Beside you, the performer, who are you interacting with, if anyone? Are you having an intimate discussion, or an internal dialogue, or are you talking to a larger external group (audience)?

2. What’s happening? Identify and summarize the whole story, and then break down what’s happening in each complete thought as you go through the storyline.

3. How does that make you feel? After identifying what is happening, you want to be able to express within each complete thought how it makes

you feel. Using these questions throughout the text will help manifest and create appropriate moods as generated. This helps create change, which creates interest, which creates entertainment value.

4. What is the event? How did you get here? What motivated you to break into song? This is the only answer that does not refer directly to the text. It’s now your moment!

5. How does the story end? Knowing how the story ends helps the performer know where to take the audience for closure.

Utilizing this methodology will prepare and empower the performer to deliver a successful and emotionally moving performance. ■



Theresa Weatherbee is a BHS Performance Judge, HI Performance Category Specialist, and a world-renowned coach specializing in transformational experiences that create authentic, believable performances.
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Technique (patterns) or freestyle: is there a conflict?

The terms *conducting* and *directing* are not synonymous in our HU Directors College curriculum. Conducting is what we do with our hands and faces to convey to singers what we see and feel in a musical score. Directing refers to the extra-musical aspects of leading a singing organization—leadership techniques, human resources management, counseling, logistics, time management, score study, rehearsal techniques, etc. This article focuses on the conducting aspect.

We also need to distinguish between the conducting terms *patterns* and *freestyle*, an issue that still surfaces after 25+ years of teaching professional gestures at Directors College. Pattern technique refers to the perfunctory “floor-door-wall-ceiling” technique that has all ictus (beat) points touching the same arbitrary plane in front of the conductor. Freestyle technique describes conducting that uses seemingly random, free-form, arm-waving akin to getting caught in a cobweb. Either of these techniques alone can lead to stilted or asynchronous performances.

Barbershop directors/conductors can be anything from untrained volunteers to music professors. Those from the volunteer ranks can be good musicians, but most lack consistent formal training in the basics of conducting. Most bachelor-level music programs provide only one or two semesters of conducting classes with minimal real-world conducting opportunities; a musician’s conducting technique may have atrophied by the time they have discovered barbershop.



Therefore, Directors College classes focus on the vital basics that must be mastered: posture, patterns, preparations, cueing, subdividing beats, treatments of gestures of syncopation, internal and external releases/breaths, asymmetric meters, dynamics, left- and right-hand independence. It is the language of professional conductors that ultimately can become excellent tools for conducting barbershop.

Once barbershop conductors master the basics, they are ready to meld techniques with phrasal conducting—the freestyle techniques that shape their music into a whole new level of performance. They can do this because they and their musicians are also skilled in the basics. *Arm-waving without context or causation is confusion in music, not clarity.*

So, the answer to the question in the title is, “No.” However, the relationship is symbiotic. There will be confusion unless every gesture we use is founded in our culture’s common conducting language. We can’t develop our own conducting gesture language and expect it to be readily understood by all people. If we

don’t have grounding in the basics of conducting, anything we do that allows us to effectively communicate rubato, rallentando, accelerando, dynamics, tone color, articulation, phrase shaping, or melding will lack context and foundation.

Patterns and freestyle are interdependent and mutually beneficial. Wise conducting students will choose to honestly recognize where they are on the conducting continuum. They will work through the rubrics to develop into consummate conductors who use gestures effectively and efficiently to raise the musicality level of their choruses.

Directors College faculty continue to hone the conducting curriculum with clear objectives and rubrics that represent real-world expectations. Stay tuned for more developments. ■



Dr. Don Campbell is a Professor of Music at Southern Wesleyan University (S.C.), faculty member at Harmony University, and dean of the Directors College at HU. dcampbell@swu.edu

Grow and enrich a secondary school chorus using barbershop

School choir directors are always looking for ways to make their program more visible and desirable to students so it can flourish and grow. Barbershop singing can help!

Here are some suggestions to get started.

BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB (EITHER EXTRA-CURRICULAR OR ONCE A MONTH IN CLASS)

Agenda:

- Watch an epic quartet performance video as inspiration.
- Allow the students to explore various vocal parts by teaching all parts of tags to everyone.
- Online tag resources—include some tags in SSAA, TTBB, and SATB.
- Encourage students who want to try their part on their own.
- Look for standouts to start a quartet or ensemble.
- Challenge student leaders/groups to demonstrate and become responsible to teach.
- Club t-shirts promote a sense of belonging and help advertise.

EXTRACURRICULAR GROUPS (QUARTETS/OCTETS) WITHIN THE CHORAL PROGRAM

- Use tags to audition parts.
- Use BHS music resources.
- Make students responsible for learn-



The author with her Gaither High School choir at Midwinter 2018, where she was honored as the 2018 NAfME/BHS National Music Educator of the Year.

ing with sheet music and tracks.

- Contact a local barbershop chapter to find help coaching the style.
- Opportunities for evaluation/competition (Solo & Ensemble, Next Gen, Rising Star)

A PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION — BENEFITS EXPERIENCED BY MY CHORAL PROGRAM

- Increased visibility due to performance opportunities with no need for risers or instruments.
- Increased TTBB presence due to students outside of chorus hearing the quartet.

STUDENT INITIATIVE

- Quartets researched song choices, barbershop style and rehearsed on their own.
- Groups coached each other
- Students taught as section leaders at barbershop festival.
- Singers arranged their own tags.

INCREASED MUSICAL AWARENESS AMONG ALL SINGERS TRANS- FERRED TO OTHER MUSIC

- Tuning
- Balance
- Blend
- Harmonic functions
- Vocal part functions

From the experience of me and many of my colleagues, students will take and run with barbershop after learning it. It was a small investment for a big pay-off!

Please email me if you have any questions! ■

HU Activities Director



One of the best parts about being at HU—apart from the awesome learning and high caliber shows—is the ongoing singing and socializing. To give both of these areas more focus and growth, the HU team is glad to appoint Blair Brown as HU Activities Director. Blair will oversee group singing activities like tag zones, woodshedding rooms, Polecat sing-alongs, brigades, and the open mic activities in the Satchmo

Lounge. Additionally, Blair will make sure the Dine Along experience, where you get to sit with your HU faculty idols, is well organized and communicated. Last, Blair is concocting ongoing social activities for you to connect with even more barbershop friends from around the world to enrich your HU experience. Welcome, Blair!



Debbie Cleveland is a clinician, coach, two-time quartet gold medalist, and retired 35-year public school choral music educator who directed Tampa's highly-awarded Gaither High School choirs.
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10 Things your chapter can learn from successful startups

Barbershop chapters have a lot in common with tech startups: they're small, scrappy organizations developing a unique product for their local market. Here are some strategies that these once-small companies have used to become successful household names!

- **Decide on core values:** These guiding principles define your identity and inform every decision you make.
- **Know your personality:** This reflects the passions of your smaller teams.
- **Be authentic:** Craft and encourage a consistent image within and outside the group.
- **Focus on your audience:** Know what your market wants and what it didn't know they needed.
- **Keep open communication:** Lower the barriers between members and leaders.
- **Start small:** Do your one thing better than others and grow from there.
- **Build a platform:** Carve out a space to keep members continually connected.
- **Diversify funding sources:** Get past bootstrapping and progress to grants and donors.
- **Lead instead of follow:** Don't just jump on trends; challenge and rethink them to stand out from the crowd.
- **Adapt to change:** Listen to both your audience and member needs and adjust accordingly.

If you're looking to try something new, give some of these ideas a shot! And if you'd like more, come to Harmony University where we discuss these further and dive deep into how startups efficiently develop their product for the market. ■



Rafi Hasib is a candidate Music judge, sings with **Voices of Gotham** and **Parkside Harmony**, and has served in many chapter, district, and Society-level roles, including many in leadership. rafihasib@gmail.com

Reimagining membership

For a long time, Zoom was a necessity—but now it's also a great tool for chapter growth

Our world became very different in 2020. We all had to rethink how we interacted, worked, and, especially, how we sang. As my chorus returned to in-person rehearsals, we discovered that, through the necessity of the lockdown, we had accumulated tools to attract and grow membership.

In the 12 years I've directed my chorus, we have handled membership and attendance in a pretty average way: come to rehearsals, learn your music, if you miss more than X number of rehearsals we need to know why.

During lockdown, we had to majorly rethink what chorus membership looked like. Could we grow our membership when we were meeting virtually? How could we hold auditions? Would we be able to convey our chorus culture and goals over Zoom? When we returned to in-person rehearsals, the answers to those questions enabled us to create an enhanced in-person rehearsal experience:

- **Zoom is always a part of our rehearsals.** We have a large-screen TV hooked up to a laptop, with an external camera and USB microphone. Members can tune in from anywhere, be seen, and be a contributing part of rehearsal. They can raise their hands, ask questions, sing along, and even lead warm-ups.
- **Zoom is livestreamed to our private Facebook group.** Our members who can't access Zoom can still watch on FB. And the video is saved to that group, so that even if someone can't attend in real time they can go back and watch everything. This enables them to keep up musically and stay connected.

- **All forms of participation count as attendance.** Are you watching on FB live? Participating via Zoom? In the room and on the risers? You are attending a rehearsal.
- **Social and team-building activities include all participants.** If we have an activity going on, one person is assigned to lead that activity for our Zoom members. They step up to the screen, ask members to unmute, and lead the activity from there.
- **All members are recognized and supported.** No matter where our members live or how they attend rehearsals, they are highlighted in the newsletter, recognized on Zoom, chosen for special honors, and considered for leadership positions.

All of these accommodations make rehearsal access equitable and open. If a member is sick, they can still attend online. If a member is long-distance (several of our members live 6-9 hours away), they can join us from wherever they are. If one of our singers is unable to drive or leave their house for a long period of time, they are no longer isolated from the rehearsal experience. Also, our guests now have a range of ways to participate in a rehearsal, depending on their comfort level, and are more likely to check us out.

We are finding that the addition of virtual tools in our in-person rehearsals have created a richer and more varied membership experience. We have been able to welcome members from all distances, many walks of life, and a variety of circumstances. We are so much better for it. ■



Jennifer Cooke is an HU faculty member and the front-line director for **Scenic City Chorus (SA)** in Chattanooga, **Music City Sound chorus (HI)** in Nashville; she sings with **Presto!** quartet. jen.cooke71@gmail.com



To all of our donors,

Thank you for Stepping Up!

It's impossible to express just how grateful we are for your support of the Mission and Vision of the Barbershop Harmony Society. Your generosity and gifts have made it possible to do *so much more* to bring barbershop, harmony, and joy into people's lives all over the world during a time when they've needed it the most.

It's because of **YOU** that more people than ever are Keeping the Whole World Singing. Thank you.

-BHS Staff and Board

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What do the scores mean? And how do we get better?

As a judge, instructor, clinician, and coach, the two questions I'm asked most often are: "What do the scores mean?" and "How do we get better?" Here is an abbreviated list focusing on habits of different scoring ranges. Want to improve? Look at the scoring range above you and work on those habits.

PRACTICE HABITS OF 50-59

- **No missed notes:** this is job one.
- **All chords are 100% complete:** no doubling or missing parts.
- **Understanding the song style:** ensure no learned bad habits, e.g. swing songs have emphasis on count 2 & 4, etc.
- **Acknowledge vocal inefficiencies:** acknowledge then alleviate things like body tension, inadequate breathing, or tongue tension.

PRACTICE HABITS OF 60-64

- **Find your core sound:** a signature sound is a combination of voice sizes and likeness, timbre, style, arrangement, etc.
- **Recognize key chord moments:** identify vowels, range, or chords where great moments happen and seek to replicate them.
- **Develop a warm-up routine:** prepare the voices for a productive rehearsal. Do not skip!

PRACTICE HABITS OF 65-69

- **Warm ups now include a core song:** something comfortably in everyone's range, resulting in a natural, resonant tone, e.g. "Wonderful World," "After You've Gone," etc.—not something vocally taxing.
- **Audible overtones:** when the sound isn't clean and clear, the ensemble needs to stop and identify why.
- **Work with a coach or two:** coaches with different viewpoints—a singing coach and a performance



coach—can act as needed outside ears to address inefficiencies, inaccuracies, and performance strategies.

- **Consistently work delivery:** each performance of a song has a familiar and dependable feel to it, rich with artistic variety.

PRACTICE HABITS OF 70-75

- **Mechanics become more important:** e.g. consider why a particular swipe is used and how it can be sung more artistically rather than just executing the notes on the page.
- **Singing becomes more melodic:** basses sing melodically, baritones attempt to out-melody the melody, etc.
- **Nuance in lyrics:** pull the important words out, add agogic stress, etc.
- **Focus on chord balance:** singers begin to understand what position they are in a chord and how to balance it by backing off or bringing out a note.
- **Expansion is a big deal:** effort needs to be expended to find out why expansion isn't constant. No more "happy accidents."
- **In-tune singing is constant:** spend extra effort to eradicate flattening.

PRACTICE HABITS OF 76-80

- **Regular duetting fills in holes:** in order of importance: L/Bs, L/Br, Bs/Br, L/T, T/Bs, T/Br. Perhaps 30-50% of rehearsal.
- **Intonation a must on every chord:** missed chords now distract from the texture.

PRACTICE HABITS OF 81+

- **Duet like it's your job:** quickly eradicate minor blemishes. 50-70% of the rehearsal.
- **Regular coaching:** all categories represented.
- **No forcing or pressure:** chords should ring; we don't force them.

ANOTHER WAY OF THINKING OF IT

- **C-level** is chasing notes and words.
- **B-level** is chasing chords and overtones.
- **A-level** is chasing consistency and artistry. ■



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JULY 23-30, 2023





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Pre-register your quartet today.

Commuter Registrations

If you are NOT staying in on-campus housing but would still like to join us for the week you can do so.

**REGISTER TODAY AT
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Adapt SATB arrangements to barbershop

Our world is filled with beautiful choral music and hymns arranged for SATB voices. Adapting them to the barbershop idiom may seem daunting, but the KISS method (Keep It Simple 'Shopper) reduces it, for example, to TTBB in two easy steps:

1. Drop the soprano line an octave to become the new lead line, and
2. Leave everything else alone. Really. That's it.

This means that what had been the alto now becomes the tenor, tenor becomes baritone, and the bass gets to just keep on grooving. Let's look at "Silent Night" (Example 1) as presented in several prominent hymnals. Example 2 shows it barbershopped in TTBB voicing.

While the KISS method produces a good arrangement, the result is not without its pitfalls. You may either ac-

Ex 1: Silent Night as presented in the United Methodist Hymnal

Ex 2: Silent Night adapted for barbershop

cept it as-is or tweak the result according to these considerations:

Range/tessitura. Voicing might be too low, especially for the lead and some basses at the end. While changing the key up shouldn't put the tenors too high, watch out for the new baritone part in measure 5.

Voice crossing. Looking at measure 9 (Ex. 2), the lead and tenor cross each other on the second beat. This is relatively common in barbershop, but be sure to mark the crossover (an X) to avoid confusion. More concerning, however, is the cross between the lead and bass in the penultimate measure, where the lead drops to the D while the bass stays on the F (Ex 3). An easy fix is to have the Bass drop to the B^b below the D on the way to the low F.

Dense texture. There's a low, closed position chord on the first measure, second beat of Example 1. This is particularly vexing, as the density of the chord must be weighed against the parallel motion between lead and tenor. One possible solution is to omit the F (the 5th of the chord) and have the baritone stay on the B^b. With this happening four times in a 12-measure work, the baritone might get sick of that B^b.

Another example: measure 7 has a closed position E^b with a doubled root

on the first beat (Ex. 4). In this instance, if the chord is fully opened up with the baritone moving to the B^b and the tenor to the E^b an octave above, the sense of rising motion is lost. A good compromise is to shift the baritone to the B^b with the tenor. Neither of these examples are too impactful, however, and could easily be left alone. When in doubt, trust your ear.

Adapting SATB and hymn arrangements to barbershop can be done very simply by changing the octave of the melody and leaving everything else alone. Mind the pitfalls and happy singing! ■

NOTE: Copyright is complex, and you must be sure you clear your arrangement via public domain or licensing. There also comes a point where making too many changes crosses into creating a new work. Use common sense, and ask when needed.

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Ex 3 m. 1

Ex. 4: m. 9

Ex 5: m. 11

Ex 6: m. 7

How to sing pauses

Pauses are not blank spaces in the music, but concentrated moments of transition: So much happens during the pause that the sound cannot keep up.

In your performance plan, at a dramatic moment you want to introduce a pause in the music and take your time before you sing the next phrase. How long should this pause be? And what are you supposed to do with your hands and faces during the pause?

Musicians love pauses. Debussy famously said that “music is the silence between the notes,” and there is no denying the emotional impact of the huge pause during **Instant Classic**’s “I Won’t Send Roses.” But how do you sing silence?

Pauses are part of the natural rhythm of speech. Sometimes we need time to figure out what to say or to find the right words, or we are caught up in a memory and need some time to return to the present. Sometimes we need time to gather our courage to say what needs to be said. For our listener, the pause indicates that we are about to say something really important, and they have no idea what it will be. This gives pauses emotional impact.

Musical pauses have many of the same functions as pauses in speech, and also signal transitions from one thought to the next (after the intro; before the next verse), helping clarify the structure of the song. They are not blank spaces, but concentrated moments of transition and narrative intent.



For instance, in “I Won’t Send Roses,” the protagonist agonizes throughout the song whether he can become the kind of person who deserves a relationship. Eventually, he cries out “just turn and go.” Did he really just say that? Did he really mean that? Yes, he meant that—he makes peace with himself and commits by continuing, “I won’t send roses.” Those are big thoughts to work through, and they need their time to come across as authentic.

Pauses are moments of unpredictability: maybe the protagonist decides to change his whole life and actually send roses from now on; the audience doesn’t know, and will wait right there with you until the decision has been made. We call barbershop’s most dramatic pause the “breakthrough pause”—the moment when the song’s defining conflict song is resolved.

So how long should a pause be? As long as it takes to process the breakthrough, or return to the present, or gather the courage to say what you need to say. The singer of a pause is an active speaker who undergoes a mental or emotional development; this development can naturally show on their face and in their hands. Although the music often comes to a loud note just before the pause and the pause itself is silent, the emotional and narrative dynamics keep growing through the pause, until you carefully set them down as you continue singing.

Instant Classic opened its 2015 gold medal-winning Quarterfinals set with “I Won’t Send Roses.” The iconic song delivers a powerful example of how to use pauses for maximum musical and dramatic effect.

Pauses are delicious moments of narrative unpredictability that can be celebrations of tension and intensity. Feel free to experiment with long pauses and fill them with emotional and narrative intent. Understanding the intent of the pause will help you understand its execution—and you’ll have the audience on the edge of their seats. ■



Alexander Koller and Stephanie Schmidt are co-founders and co-organizers of both the BinG! Coaching Certification Program and the European Harmony Brigade. They are both candidate BHS judges, Alexander in Music and Stefanie in Performance. Alexander is a university professor by day, occasional arranger by night. Stefanie coaches barbershop ensembles throughout Europe. akoller@gmail.com, jinxedstef@gmail.com

Streamline your rehearsals: Five Rules of Articulation for expressive singing

Directors are only effective when the ensemble understands the instructions we give. In my 16 years as a school choir and barbershop chorus director, I found I spent too much time talking about individual spots in music, which lowered my effectiveness and slowed the pace of learning. I resolved to, instead, teach patterns and principles.

Following are five rules my co-director and I created to address articulation so our choruses could take more ownership of their learning, increasing their retention. Because our ensembles have learned and practiced these established principles, we can now simply say “Rule 3” after a run-through, and the singers will immediately improve upon that principle the next time we sing the passage. Usually, no further instruction is needed! This streamlines the rehearsal process while improving the skills of the singers. Here are the rules our ensembles have internalized.

RULE 1: NO TWO CONSECUTIVE NOTES CAN SOUND THE SAME

Strive for variety in dynamic, color, articulation, mood, emotion, etc. to make phrases more interesting for singers and audiences. Lyrics, pitch, and meaning constantly shift, so each note should be given its own value and importance. Monotone and direct repetition are the enemies of artistic, expressive singing.

RULE 2: LONG NOTES MUST GO SOMEWHERE

Any rhythmic duration longer than one beat in a piece must have life, dynamic contrast, vocal color



change (such as twang), or another modification—perhaps even vibrato. Note that Rule 2 partners with Rule 1.

RULE 3: UNIFY TARGET VOWELS / MATCHED RESONANCES

Vowels carry the sounds of vocal music. Unifying vowels increases the opportunity for expansion. When teaching this rule, your ensemble must know exactly what vowel choice you want from them. It is vital to either use basic International Phonetic Alphabet symbols (IPA) or simply spell out the vowel choice. For example, the word “sing” could either be sung as /sin/ or sIn/ or as seeng or sihng. Vowel work can be tedious, but unifying vowels helps provide clarity of lyric and tone beauty.

RULE 4: EVERY CONSONANT MUST BE OBSERVED TECHNICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY

While vowels provide art and beauty to language, consonants provide drama, excitement, and clarity to words. In barbershop, we are a lyrically driven, vernacular art form, where we often refer to spoken language to inform sung text. This rule focuses not only on text intelligibility, but on emotionally-driven connection that propels the musical and lyrical message. The greater objective is a human connection through lyrical and musical delivery.

RULE 5: END THE PHRASE BY PREPARING FOR THE NEXT ONE

Musical and lyrical phrases are sequential; they build off each other. How a phrase ends can make or break this connection. If the dynamic level at the end of a phrase is dramatically different from the start of the next phrase, the audience could be confused unless there is a reason. Emotional shifts occur in the breath between phrases, but the line and musical development are in both phrases and connects the two. This rule is one of the more challenging, high-level skills listed, but it can easily provide the most impact.

Singers thrive on structure and clear communication. Directors, be clear in your instruction. Establishing patterns like these five rules for articulation serves my ensembles well. By teaching simple principles, singers will remember better and these tasks quickly become habitual and the singing significantly more musical and rehearsal time better managed. ■



Christopher Loftin is a Choral Music Education Ph.D. candidate. He is also a barbershop singer, researcher, and coach as well as a 16-year music educator.
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Filling the memory banks: learn your music faster!

Singing without sheet music gives us a prime opportunity for better audience engagement, but even for experienced singers, learning all the music can present a real challenge. Here are 5 key strategies to make this process easier.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Our brains have evolved to make our lives more manageable by screening out information that is easy to access or unimportant. Learning actively (annotating your score, discussing key passages, rehearsing) rather than passively (merely listening to learning tracks) helps your brain to identify the sheet music as important and worthy of recalling.

SPACED LEARNING

While cramming can help build confidence, it is ineffective for long-term learning. Retention is dramatically in-

creased by revisiting material at regular intervals, having left short periods in between. Spread your learning out over several days or weeks.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Each time you force yourself to recall a piece of information without assistance (retrieval), you strengthen neural pathways, making that retrieval easier. Regularly singing short passages without access to your sheet music isn't just great for finding out what you know: it actually helps you learn the music.

THE TESTING EFFECT

Directly after an episode of retrieval practice, your brain is in collection mode and wants to learn things. Immediately following a no-sheet-music run-through of a song, sing it through with your sheet music and watch your brain magpie all the bits you missed before!

DUAL CODING

Encoding information from working memory to long-term memory is faster when you receive it in multiple forms. We encode information differently if we see it, hear it, or feel it. Adding visual cues, like pictures, or kinesthetic devices, like actions, will also make your learning faster.

For your most efficient learning, spread the process out and intersperse regular retrieval practice with actively engaging with your score. ■



Boo de Bruin is the BABS Music Category director, sings tenor with European quartet champions, Avalon, and is Assistant Musical Director of Amersham A Cappella. boo.debruin.candj@singbarbershop.com

Why is everyone talking about twang?

Can you cackle like the Wicked Witch? ... imitate bagpipes? ... baaa like a sheep? If so, you're using *twang*—a brassy, often perceptively loud vocal color used to create an impression of energy and expression. While twang is often associated with country western music, these days it is commonly used in gospel and musical theatre singing as well. When used appropriately, it can add a level of sophistication and excitement to any performance.

Twang is easier to experience than to explain, but here goes. To Twang:

- Sing “ng.”
- Keeping your tongue high, nasal-

ize an “ee” vowel by raising your velum (soft palate) from a low to mid position.

- Still nasalized, narrow the laryngeal opening (called the AES), essentially making the brightest ‘ee’ possible (Try quacking like a duck to learn how AES narrowing feels in the top of the throat.) and Voila! you’re TWANGING!*
- Equalize the rest of your vowels and pitches.

Twang can be useful for increasing range (both directions), smoothing out registers, stabilizing high notes, fixing tuning, improving projection, and expressing ourselves on stage. With a

little practice, you’ll access more voice, more artistry, and more fun! ■

**Done right, you’ll notice that twang feels different from “bright” singing, which is a function of a wide AES and high tongue and velum positions.*



Dr. Philip Grant joined the faculty at HU in 2019 and has quickly become a highly sought-after clinician, working with **Masters of Harmony, New Tradition Chorus, ATX**, and a dozen more. philipstanleygrant@gmail.com



WE'RE ENERGIZING YOUNG SINGERS AT
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There's a **new and exciting event** happening at Harmony University this year! It's called **Harmony Camp Chorus**, and it's a week of learning how to sing barbershop designed for students (ages 11-17) who live in the local New Orleans area. They'll commute to Loyola University during each day of HU from 9:30 a.m. to

3:30 p.m., with a performance slot during the incredible Saturday Evening Show.

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We ran the wrong list in the January/February 2023 issue! We've combined the Members Eternal that should have run in that issue with this issue's names. Many apologies!



J. Carl Hancuff
Celebrated emcee, bass of famed show quartet Salt Flats

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Honoring Earl Moon

Legendary Barbershopper Earl Moon was a top quartetter, chorus director, arranger, judge, coach, and teacher. His **Far Westerners** quartet earned three International bronze medals in the '70s, and Earl directed the **Whittier Choralaires** for over 25 years.

Earl's classic arrangement of "Forgive Me" helped propel the **Boston Common** to International gold in 1980. This was the Common's first song in the Quarterfinals, and in the short time it took them to sing the creative intro, the whole house knew that the quartet had come to take names and kick hind foot.

A fixture at Harmony College/University, Earl could often be seen holding court and puffing on his ever-present pipe. Sometimes, his best pal would be with him, a little-known fellow named Lou Perry.

Astute readers of this page may recall that the Jan/Feb 2022 tag was the **Buffalo Bills'** ending to this same song. And guess what—someday the trilogy will be completed by a third version, one which happens to be my favorite tag of all time. It was arranged by ... well, you'll see, though probably not any time soon.

Subtle chromatic adventures await you, especially you tenors, when you sing this gem. For example, in measures 5-6, when you think you are simply repeating a note, a tiny adjustment might be required to make the chords lock and ring.

Earl also mentored many fledgling arrangers and judges, me among them. (Only Dave Briner gave me more help figuring out arranging.) My favorite memory of Earl was from a contest many moons (!) ago, when I nervously walked onto the stage with my quartet. Earl beamed up at me from the pit—er, judging area—and my butterflies flew away. I have passed this gift on to countless groups during my judging career. Thanks from all of us, friend Earl. ■

I'm Always Chasing Rainbows

TTBB voicing

Earl Moon

Tenor Lead

Bari Bass

Wait - ing to find a lit - tle blue - bird in vain. You

see, there's no blue - bird for me.

SSAA voicing

Earl Moon

Tenor Lead

Bari Bass

Wait - ing to find a lit - tle blue - bird in vain. You

see, there's no blue - bird for me.

SATB voicing

Earl Moon

Tenor Lead

Bari Bass

Wait - ing to find a lit - tle blue - bird in vain. You

see, there's no blue - bird for me.



We have an incredible opportunity to digitize and restore our wide array of rare, obsolete, and degrading media formats, and we need your help!

LET'S CELEBRATE

PRESERVATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

APRIL 11, 2023



The Society's 85th Anniversary is right around the corner, and we are excited to celebrate the incredible memories with barbershoppers all over the world!

As our anniversary approaches, we are eager to continue the efforts to digitize and restore our vast archives of audio and video content that goes back to the earliest days of The Society. **But we need your help!** It's only through the generosity of our members and singing communities that we can secure the resources necessary to unlock this

barbershop gold mine and bring our past back to life in full high-resolution glory.

Unlocking and sharing these treasured performances online worldwide pushes our art form forward, by celebrating both its rich heritage and modern relevance for singers of all ages and backgrounds. Your generosity supports this delicate and resource-intensive process. Consider a "birthday gift" this year toward this labor of love!



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