

THE FLOW OF BREATH: A FUSION OF YOGA AND SINGING

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Lecture:

How can yoga help us deal with stress, anxiety and sleeplessness?

Competition and being judged is, unfortunately, strongly present in the singing world, whether you sing as a soloist or in an ensemble. We constantly have to prove ourselves during musical rehearsals, stage rehearsals, performances and not to forget the auditions!

This causes stress, anxiety and sleeplessness. The body starts to tense and we begin to breathe a little quicker, and shallower. As singers we know how to breathe when we sing but we often underestimate our breath in our daily life. Breath is the greatest asset we have, it is

naturally meditative and always with you. We should listen more often to our body and listen to our breathing.

The connections between yoga and singing are many. Both require control of a strong flexible body, awareness, body alignment, mental concentration, the ability to coordinate mind and body and the use of breath! Yoga offers relaxation techniques for both body and mind that allow the singer to perform with a sense of ease and confidence.

My yoga teaching is based on the Inner Axis Method, an interdisciplinary system by Max Strom, one of the most revered and respected teachers of personal transformation and yoga. It is a breath-based yoga movement, based on Hatha Yoga, Qigong and Mindfulness. The simple and accessible techniques enable deep transformation and meaning for everyone; all ages, abilities, and walks of life. It deals directly with stress, anxiety and sleeplessness. Yoga creates unity within the group, nobody is there to judge you. You are there to explore your own individual journey.

Workshop

This workshop will use the principles and strategies of the Inner Axis Method through breathing, movement and relaxation, to help candidates learn techniques to deal with and manage stress and anxiety.

Jean-Claude Ohms is a classically trained singer who studied at the Lemmensinstituut Leuven (Belgium). He also studied Vocal Pedagogy at the Brussels Conservatoire and gained a BA (Hons) Degree in Opera Studies at Rose Bruford College, Sidcup (London).

Jean-Claude sang professionally for over thirty years both as a soloist and chorus member. He sang with Vlaamse Opera and Vlaams Radio Koor (Belgium), Chapelle Royale (France), Grange Park Opera, Opera Holland Park and English Bach Festival (UK) and De Nationale Opera and Nederlandse Reisopera (The Netherlands) and sang many times in both Lied and Oratorio all over Europe.

Jean-Claude always had to deal with nerves but, about five years ago, performance anxiety took the better of him. Headaches, severe pain in neck, shoulders and arms and sleepless nights lead to vocal tension. Via an acupuncturist, psychologist and Osteopath, he decided to follow a beginner's course for yoga and knew instantly that this was the way to go. Since then he followed classes in Inner Axis, Vinyasa Yoga, Yin Yoga, Restorative Yoga, Yoga Nidra, TRE (Trauma and Stress Released Tension), Pilates, Feldenkrais and Qigong. This passion has developed into a new professional career path. Jean-Claude completed his 200 hours Yoga Teacher Training with Max Strom at Triyoga London, Europe's leading yoga and Pilates centre. He teaches occasionally at Triyoga London and privately both professional singers and keen amateurs. His yoga teaching is for people of all different walks of life, in particular yoga especially designed for singers.

Jean-Claude teaches the Choristers at St Paul's Cathedral and he is Singing Teacher at the Junior Department of the Royal College of Music

He is a member of AOTOS (The Association of Teachers of Singing, UK) and a member of BVA (British Voice Association)