

The Kaleidoscope of Voice Methods

Door Dr. Barbara Hoos de Jokisch

Singing lessons differ from instrumental lessons, among other things, in that there is no visible acoustic instrument. Singers are their own instrument, they build it and perfect it by already using it. The singing teacher is intensively involved in this building process - through the role model function of his/her own voice, and in any case through his/her imagination of sound and ability to perceive. Written voice schools are used comparatively sparingly in singing lessons - the lessons are largely based on the exercises and procedures that the teachers themselves have adopted in oral tradition from their own singing training, possibly expanded through additional training. In this way, a wealth of different personal methods is practiced in singing lessons. In addition, certain methods with fixed contents and procedures have become established in recent decades, mainly based on functional principles.

Despite the variety of methods, the number of underlying elements is manageable - human voices, for all their recognizable uniqueness, are based on the same physiological processes. Thus, singing methods seem to gain their specific profile primarily through the fact that the individual tasks are weighted and arranged differently. The respective genre is also decisive here. Other factors, such as above all the professional selfconcept of the teacher, his/image of man and cultural world view, interact in the characterization of singing methods.

How do I actually teach? Which methodological elements have I become acquainted with in the course of my training, which do I apply myself, which have I consciously not adopted? How could I describe the methodological profile of my teaching?

The contribution consists of an interactive lecture with practical parts and provides an opportunity to approach these questions - with the help of a versatile conceptual toolbox, suggestions for self-reflection and through collegial exchange.

Dr. Barbara Hoos de Jokisch is a classical voice teacher and methodologist at the University of the Arts (UdK) in Berlin, Germany. She is lecturing at the Academy of the German Association of voice teachers BDG, coaching professionals in all fields of work in breathing, speaking and voice, and publishing and lecturing internationally on voice pedagogy. Besides central Europe, her teaching has taken her to Mexico, the United States, and Namibia/South Africa.

Beginning with her own voice training, Barbara Hoos de Jokisch experienced a broad variety of vocal methods and developed a deep interest in their special character and theoretical foundation. In her doctoral thesis (Die geistige Klangvorstellung, Breitkopf & Härtel, 2015) she explored the voice theory and pedagogy of the renowned German voice teacher Franziska Martienßen-Lohmann (1887-1971), whose books contain a complex, coherent voice terminology.

Barbara Hoos de Jokisch's aim in teaching vocal methodology, rather than bringing a single teaching method to her voice pedagogy students, is to make them familiar with different avenues to the voice and its training – in a non-judgmental, tolerant way. This led her to the elaboration of the model “The Kaleidoscope of Voice Methods” in which different voice methods can be analyzed in their elements, characterized, and understood.

