Vocal Courses

Note: These courses are open only to vocalists, with the exception of Choral Musicianship and approved rhythm section accompanists (bass and drums) for Vocal Performance courses.

**Choral Musicianship** - Richard Boukas. A mixed *a capella* choir (women and men) comprised of vocal and instrumental jazz students. Offers musicians the invaluable experience of performing polyphonic (contrapuntal) music from 1300 to the present. Repertoire will be masterpieces from the sacred and secular traditions of Europe, with some works from other cultures including the Americas and Eastern Europe. The primary goal is to let the music serve as our natural teacher—a “musicianship doctor” that addresses imbalances in our skills, and enhance work in all other core curriculum areas (i.e. Ear-Training etc.) Prerequisite: Intermediate sight-singing abilities in treble and (men) bass clef are required. Vocalists: at least one semester of vocal sight-singing or permission of instructor. Enrollment by audition. **1-2 credits**

**Piano for Vocalists** - Rachel Z. Essential to the development of a singer’s craft is the ability to accompany him or herself on the piano. A vocalist needs to be able to play the chords of a tune in order to adequately learn the tune and to develop a stronger working knowledge of the language of jazz harmony and melody. By the end of this course a vocalist will be able to select an appropriate key for a piece of music and then play through the chords while singing the melody. Prerequisite: one year of piano or the equivalent. **1 credit**

**Story, Song, and Stage** - Kamal Scott. This course investigates the story in a song and how to stage that story effectively. It is designed to aid the vocalist in becoming a public performer capable of engaging an audience in a personal interpretation of the meaning of a song. This course is a part of the required vocal performance curriculum per evaluation placement; it may be taken either before or after Vocal Performance 2. **2 credits**

**Vocal Blues Ensemble** – Danny Mixon. This course will teach Blues and Jazz concepts in various styles, with the emphasis on harmony and strong rhythmic interpretation of the Blues. Vocalists will learn how to interpret blues lines and jazz lines that lean into blues interpretation. Instrumentalists will learn to play together and perform Blues and Jazz styles. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Improvisation 2** - Richard Harper. For intermediate and advanced singers. Building on musicianship skill, these classes explore the challenges of “blowing” over changes including blues, rhythm changes, and other standard forms. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Jazz Ensemble** - Amy London. In Vocal Jazz Ensemble, students have the opportunity to finesse such professionally demanding skills as: diaphragmatic breathing, proper vocal placement, blending with other singers, vowel and diction clarification, and sight singing, as well as having fun singing beautiful and challenging music as a group. VJE will sing works by such renowned arrangers as Darmon Meader, Dave Lambert, Gene Puerling, Phil Mattson and Michelle Weir, as well as up and coming arrangers such as Dylan Pramuk (NS Jazz BFA 2009), Robert Lepley and Pamela Watson. Student compositions and arrangements are welcome as are *A Capella*
pieces. Choral singing is an important skill for any professional singer. There is paying work for singers who have good choral chops, from church and synagogue gigs to jingles to film scores to vocal jazz and a Capella performing groups, and Broadway shows as well. VJE will culminate in a concert in the New School Performance Space at the end of the semester. Come and join the fun! 1-2 credits

**Vocal Musicianship 2** - Richard Harper. For beginning and intermediate students, these courses will focus on basic skills needed for efficient sight singing and vocal improvisation. They include singing scales, modes, chords, roots, rhythms, using solfege, and “singing by numbers.” This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Performance 1** - Joan Stiles. In this class vocal students are accompanied by a rhythm section and learn how to communicate effectively with the band – explain the form and mood of the tune, count off tempos, assign and signal solos, introductions and endings. They also gain experience in writing out clear transposed lead sheets and making basic arranging decisions. Within this framework, they develop repertoire, stage presence, Jazz rhythmic concepts and simple improvisation. This course is a part of the required vocal performance curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Performance 2** - Amy London. This is a repertoire building class with emphasis on preparing the student to pass the sophomore jury. Students are expected to utilize the standard song literature and research the composers. In singing, good story telling is emphasized. Interpretation of lyrics and creating lyrics based on the story are stressed. We also cover communication with the audience, stage presence, as well as microphone and amplification techniques. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Performance 3** - Janet Lawson. Vocalists learn to listen and interact with the band as an equal partner. This involves a high degree of listening skills, theoretical knowledge, as well as knowledge of both the singer’s craft and what instrumentalists are doing. Emphasis in this course is placed on applied theory; being able to improvise having internalized the melody, chords, and scales; and personalizing the musical interpretations through arrangements, improvisation, and improvising lyrics. This course may be part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **2 credits**

**Vocal Sight Singing 1B** - Junko Arita. This class is designed to help students develop basic sight-singing skills using Solfege, Melodia, as well as original compositions and/or arrangements of existing music. The class emphasizes techniques for staying calm while maintaining the correct rhythm in realistic professional situations. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **1 credit**

**Vocal Sight-Singing 2B** - Junko Arita. This class, a continuation of Sight-Singing 1, develops more advanced sight-singing skills in non-diatonic situations. It also applies analysis and different approaches to music theory and sight-singing. This course is a part of the required vocal proficiency curriculum per evaluation placement. **1 credit**