
I WASN'T ABLE TO USE MY DIAGNOSIS AND CORRECTION "MUSCLE" AS OFTEN AS I WOULD HAVE LIKED, BUT I WAS IN FACT DEVELOPING A NEW MUSCLE. I WAS LEARNING TO DEVELOP MORE APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS AND TO APPRECIATE EVEN SMALL STEPS TAKEN TOWARD MEETING THEM.

City and Frank Sinatra High School, and found myself at Louis Brandeis High School in Manhattan. This was no mere geographical change of locations. Brandeis is comprised largely of students who do not want to be in school at all, some of whom have been there for more than four years; in many if not most cases, the students are putting forth the bare minimum of effort to graduate. Thus, a key difference was the amount of time the students have to or want to put into music. At present, it is required that New York City students take only one semester of music education in their four years of high school. Since most of them are taking the course merely to pass, classroom management became an even stronger, more present issue. If I thought the chatty teenagers at Sinatra were intimidating, the students at Brandeis proved even more of a challenge.

Although this time I entered the internship feeling that I was better equipped to multi-task teaching, demonstrating, and managing behavior, nonetheless I found it was intimidating to stand up in front of students who were bigger than me, closer to my age, and who had very little (if any) connection to classical music or musical theater. We spent much of our time talking about the pieces they were singing, chosen for them by Metropolitan Opera Guild "Urban Voices" program teacher, Ronnie Oliver, or talking about basic music concepts: notation, reading in basic clefs, etc. "Miss, I don't like this," was heard at least once a visit, if not multiple times. There were at any given moment two classroom teachers—Nevena, our coordinator, and another teacher who shared the

room—to help discipline the students. Also, security guards stood nearby in the hallway, and the principal herself came in regularly—with her own personal security guard. The amount of help available for classroom management was both helpful and distracting. The students were continually pushing the envelope, making any kind of teaching difficult. On the other hand, they did get into a few pieces, like "Seasons of Love" from the Broadway musical *Rent*. This became a sort of theme song for the class, and a reward at the end of a class during which we had worked on something else. But we made the most progress on "Seasons of Love." They were able to take comments on diction and apply them, and fairly quickly.

Almost by accident, I found one thing at which the class across the board excelled and enjoyed: rhythm. In time, the students were enjoying at least the one song, and putting up with more than I ever would have thought at the beginning—all hidden inside of these rhythm exercises and games. I wasn't able to use my diagnosis and correction "muscle" as often as I would have liked, but I was in fact developing a new muscle. I was learning to develop more appropriate expectations and to appreciate even small steps taken toward meeting them. That isn't to say that there weren't days where I felt we crashed and burned, because there were. It was a struggle to get the majority of the room to participate in the process of making music, but it did happen; and to see their faces while we tapped out rhythms was priceless—a clear, simple step in the right direction.

At the very end of our time at Brandeis, the students were invited to sing at an inner-city school concert at Riverbank State Park. Fourteen of the fifty or so students enrolled chose to go on the trip and sing. We were to have two soloists sing, and then the choir would sing their favorite, "Seasons of Love." There was genuine excitement among these performers. Unfortunately after our two soloists got to sing, the choir was informed that due to an error on the part of those managing the concert, we had run out of time and would not get to sing. The disappointment was overwhelming to all of us. However, I saw one positive thing emerge. These were the same students who, at the beginning of the semester, wanted only to pass the class and didn't care to learn what we were there to teach. They had spent that day truly looking forward to sharing this music with the audience, and the dejection on their faces, and in their language, was apparent. I was touched that they had come as far as they had, and just as upset as they were that they didn't get to hear the applause they deserved. ¶

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Informal Report on Guided Intern Outcomes at the Mannes College of Music

BY JOEL LESTER

There is much good news to report about the Metropolitan Opera Guild guided intern program in which Mannes College of Music participates. Both the Mannes interns as well as the high-school students with whom they worked in 2004 achieved clear measures of success:

- Three of the high-school students that Mannes interns worked with in 2004 were accepted into the competitive NYSSMA-All State Chorus, and a fourth high-school student was accepted as an alternate. Five high-school students were accepted into the Collegiate Chorale (one of the finest amateur choruses in New York City).
- Most of the former Mannes interns who have graduated are now teaching part-time or full-time in public and private schools in the New York City area.
- Two of the former Mannes interns were hired by the Metropolitan Opera Guild for the 2004-05 Urban Voice

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Program. One of those former interns served her internship in Brandeis High School. After her first day there two years ago, she said "I couldn't live through another day there," but now thanks to the internship program she loves doing this sort of work to earn her living.

- Two other former Mannes interns are working in other Metropolitan Opera Guild programs: one is working in "Creating Original Opera," and the other is now the coordinator of the internship program itself.
- No Mannes student has ever declined an offer to join the internship program. And every single student who was eligible for a second year of the internship program signed up for that second year.
- Beth Roberts (the Mannes voice-faculty member who has taught the pedagogy classes in the internship program) taught voice in a teacher-training program run by the NYC Board of Education this past summer. Ms. Roberts discussed the Metropolitan Opera Guild internship program, and was besieged by requests for information as to how the teachers could get interns to come to their schools.
- Ms. Roberts also related a wonderful anecdote. On one occasion last season, the Mannes interns were detained for a few minutes at the Security Desk at Brandeis High School and were therefore late for their class. When they arrived in the class, the Brandeis students were so delighted to see them that a spontaneous round of applause filled the room.

Various improvements to the program in 2004-05 (which places 10 Mannes interns into three high schools: Brandeis, Bryant, and Frank Sinatra):

- We added a choral-conducting component to the pedagogy class that the interns take.
- We will create an "end-of-the-year concert," a joint recital performed by the Mannes interns and selected students from the participating high schools. ¶

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