



instructor corner

Khadijah Jabbar, B.M.
Voice Instructor

CRITICAL LISTENING AND GOAL-SETTING IN MUSIC LESSONS

In my first lesson with any new student I think it's important to establish a common ground by getting on the same page with things like previous music experience, expectations for lessons, and vocal goals. Since I've started teaching, I realized that I may have started to take articulating these things for granted. I spent my final semesters critically listening to myself in order to achieve specific goals such as maneuvering from my chest to head voice more efficiently, and taking breaths "low and slow" enough to make it through sustained phrases.

But I can still remember the very beginning of my musical journey, when I was in the exact same predicament my students find themselves in with me now. It goes along the lines of,

"What are your musical goals? Why are you taking voice lessons?"

"... I want.. to sing.... better?"

"What do you mean by better?"

"..... just like 'good' ?"

We then discuss our favorite singers, songs we enjoy listening to, and what we like about them. While I've been trained to hear my students and articulate to myself what makes their voice unique, what its strengths and weaknesses are and how to improve, the student also has to find themselves at a greater level of awareness for lessons to be efficient. While singing, or playing an instrument, you should be able to ask yourself how something felt when you did it, if it made you comfortable or uncomfortable, and how it sounded. It's harder to work towards a goal when you're not even exactly sure what it is-like having a GPS but not knowing your actual destination.

So the next time you listen to your favorite artists-take notes! Does their voice sound well supported? Are there any dynamics? How could you describe their tone (light, heavy, nasal, hooded)? Do they sing "expressively"? If so, how? THEN- when it's time for you to sing, ask yourself those same questions!

student of the month



Connie S. is a wonderful student.

She has made astounding progress in the year of lessons we've had together thus far. She is engaged and curious. Our voice lessons have been sprinkled with excursions into music theory and ear training, which she has made great strides in as well. She is brave and always gives me her best shot with anything I ask her to try, which is all I could ever ask for in a student.

-Khadijah Jabbar, Voice Instructor

upcoming events



**MAR
8-12**

SAMA is closed
for Spring Break



**MAR
25**

Randy Naranjo's
Birthday