



Class Descriptions

Thursday, July 25, 2024

8–9 p.m.

Ignite • Joan Boutilier, Karen Breidert, Caitlin Castelino, Anne Downton, Erin Howden, Mary Rhea

Join the 2024 Director and Visual Leaders co-chairs, Anne Downton and Joan Boutilier along with the rest of the weekend’s faculty, for the opening session. This class will ignite your enthusiasm, and leave you inspired and fired up for the upcoming weekend.

Friday, July 26, 2024

8:45–9:30 a.m.

Innovate • Joan Boutilier, Anne Downton

The focus of the day is “innovation”; today, we want you to get new ideas and techniques that will help you re-imagine your rehearsals, and tools to improve all of your repertoire – from classic barbershop, to widely-recognized popular music! Join our co-chairs as we prepare our minds, bodies and voices for the day.

9:30–10:45 a.m.

Singing in Style • Ben Bram

Come hear from 2X Grammy award winning vocal arranger and producer Ben Bram. He will discuss his career journey, showcasing video examples from projects he has worked on, while explaining his thought process behind each arrangement. Then, we will lead everyone in singing some arrangement excerpts while exploring vocal stylization of a few different genres.

11-Noon

Lunch Session 1

This lunch and networking session is for those that participate in choruses that score in levels B and above.

Singing in Various Styles • Ben Bram

In this session, geared for choruses that score in levels B- and below you will continue honing the skills and music taught in the general session *Singing in Style*. Ben will demonstrate using ensembles from the audience.



Class Descriptions

12:15–1:15 p.m.

Lunch Session 2

This lunch and networking session is for those that participate in choruses that score in levels B- and below.

Singing in Various Styles • Ben Bram

In this session, geared for choruses that score in levels B and above, you will continue honing the skills and music taught in the general session *Singing in Style*. Ben will demonstrate using ensembles from the audience.

1:30–2:30 p.m.

Seminar Chorus Experience • Anne Downton

Imagine a fast-paced chorus experience, as the seminar chorus prepares to coach with our guest faculty, Ben Bram, singing Joey Minshall's arrangement of *Believe* by Shawn Mendes. First, join section leaders, Mary Rhea (bass), Caitlin Castelino (baritone), Karen Breidert (lead), and Joan Boutilier (tenor) for section rehearsals. Then, join Master Director Anne Downton as she leads the seminar chorus in a short rehearsal.

Fighting Blind Followership • Erin Howden

Note: Anyone who does not wish to participate in the seminar chorus experience may select this class

Inspiring and falling victim to conformity can limit our quest to innovate. What drives our tendency to follow vs lead? Together we will take a deeper dive into purpose, intention and our own thoughts and ideas. Within you lies a creative giant waiting to escape the norm set by others. Music is art and YOU are an ARTIST.

2:30–4:15 p.m.

Chorus Coaching • Ben Bram, Anne Downton

Using the seminar chorus to demonstrate, Ben Bram and Anne Downton will lead a chorus coaching session. Observe the type of feedback a non-barbershop coach can supply when working with a modern song and arrangement in the barbershop style. Observers will be welcomed to ask questions throughout, and there will be time for a general Q & A session with Ben.



Class Descriptions

Saturday, July 27, 2024

8–9:30 a.m.

Imagine • Joan Boutilier, Karen Breidert, Caitlin Castelino, Anne Downton, Erin Howden, Mary Rhea

Imagine a warm up led by 6 members of our International Faculty, including 2 Master Faculty members, 5 Master Directors, and a Master 700 director! No imagination is needed! Join our entire faculty as we warm up our bodies, voices, and minds! This will be a fast-paced session with several different approaches to “warming up” and unifying, that will leave you imagining new possibilities for your ensemble!

9:45–10:45 a.m.

Session 5

Igniting Positive Leadership: Music Team Leadership & Development
• Joan Boutilier • Leadership

This class is designed to help directors find effective ways to train, empower, and utilize musical leaders. Through presentation, activities and discussion, imagine ways to which involve musical leaders and nurture their leadership skills for ongoing growth and positive leadership.

Up, Up and Away: Raising the Performance Bar • Erin Howden • Visual

Participants will collaborate and imagine creative coaching strategies to promote performance improvement. We will explore identification of core issues, and unpack strategies to elicit and enhance authenticity, visual unity, human inspiration, and emotional depth.

The Vocal Mechanism: What It Is & How to Use it to Achieve Healthy Singing • Caitlin Castelino • Vocal Skills

Singers have a high risk of developing voice disorders if they are not producing their voices in a healthy manner. This class dives into the anatomy and physiology of the vocal mechanism including respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation in order to provide the foundation necessary for healthy singing. We will also explore what to do and what to avoid in order to keep the voice healthy.



Class Descriptions

9:45–10:45 a.m.

Me? A Director? Yes! • Mary Rhea • Elective

Could you imagine yourself as a chorus director? Yes! This class encourages you to reflect on your own aspirations and consider the fulfilling role of a chorus director by exploring how your passion for harmony can evolve into a leadership journey. Embrace the prospect of guiding your chorus to new heights, and let your musical journey evolve into a meaningful leadership adventure. Are you ready to imagine leading the way?

The Power of the Song Assessment Tool • Thérèse Antonini • DEI

Ignite a passion for the Song Assessment Tool in this class that affirms the value of this component of the Chorus Toolkit. Learn how it can help you create more innovative, creative and authentic performances and Imagine ways in which you can use it to choose repertoire that builds on the strengths and culture of your group.

11 a.m.–Noon

Session 6

Re-Imagining Rehearsals • Karen Breidert • Leadership

A look at the elements of planning and executing an efficient, productive, and joyful rehearsal.

“The Voice” for Visual Leaders • Caitlin Castelino • Visual

It can be challenging to create an innovative visual plan that supports singers' vocal skills. This class explores the vocal mechanism, how the voice is affected by physical movement, and implementing visual plans that make that voice shine.



Class Descriptions

11 a.m.–Noon

Vowels & Diphthongs & Consonants: Oh My! • Anne Downton
• Vocal Skills

Learn the art of freely produced, ringing vowels, diphthongs and singable consonants, and re-imagine rehearsal techniques to help make the words on the page transcend off the page and across the stage. Lots of hands-on participation!

Assessing Your Performance • Joan Boutilier • Elective

Imagine using your performances, including contests and weekly rehearsals, to set direction for your chorus! Through analytical listening, presentation and discussion, deepen your understanding of the influences on your chorus's performance level and how to prioritize next steps for progress.

Moving DE&I from "Imagine" to Reality • Thérèse Antonini, Jamy Claire Archer, Kathleen Hansen, • DEI

The concept of embracing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within our groups may seem daunting and feel overwhelming at times. In this class, three panelists will introduce practical applications of DE&I principles that can help you get started (or continue your progress). Topics will include best practices to create a welcoming, inclusive culture where everyone has a sense of belonging (Kathleen Hansen); the impact of the challenges of hearing loss and strategies for leadership and singers to facilitate successful participation (Jamy Claire Archer, certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialist); and how DEI principles are aligned with all of our Guiding Principles, and how application of them will help empower us to achieve our Mission and strive toward our Vision (Thérèse Antonini). The session will include a Q&A period to provide further information and clarification.

1:30–2:30 p.m.

Session 7

You've Got to Reach 'Em • Karen Breidert • Leadership

Imagine every message from you, as a leader, being meaningful to all of the members of your ensemble. We'll look at techniques and strategies used by educators to help you turn the dream into a reality.



Class Descriptions

1:30–2:30 p.m.

Let Your Body Sing! • Erin Howden • Visual

In the participative class, we will uncover how our bodies mirror and impact our voices. Sound and physical authenticity can be optimized, through imagination, musical physicality, the power of kinesthetics, tension reduction, and general principles of musically driven movement.

Tuning 101: Tuning or Intonation? • Anne Downton • Vocal Skills

Imagine a world where every chord your group sings is in tune! We will briefly discuss the difference between harmonics and formants, and then dive into tuning techniques and the various ways that intonation can affect overall accuracy. This class will cover some vocal production exercises that can be used to improve accuracy and perceived “tuning”. Re-imagine how you handle these important concepts in your rehearsals!

Imagine the Perfect Performance Package • Caitlin Castelino, Mary Rhea • Elective

This course focuses on the art of creating unforgettable and imaginative performance packages. Explore innovative ways to weave together song selections, choreography, stage presence, and visual elements that captivate audiences and leave a lasting impression.

The Power of the Song Assessment Tool • Thérèse Antonini • DEI

Ignite a passion for the Song Assessment Tool in this class that affirms the value of this component of the Chorus Toolkit. Learn how it can help you create more Innovative, creative and authentic performances and Imagine ways in which you can use it to choose repertoire that builds on the strengths and culture of your group.



Class Descriptions

2:45–3:45 p.m.

Session 8

The Competition Experience • Karen Breidert • Leadership

Imagine having positive and healthy attitude about competition. We'll discuss how to make that happen for your ensemble!

Setting the Stage • Erin Howden • Visual

In this class we will re-imagine the creative process of using music as the map to explore meaningful staging, layering, balance, space, formation techniques and props with the goal of enhancing visual and emotional appeal, variety, and most importantly, visual communication.

Body & Voice: The Physical Essence of Singing • Mary Rhea • Vocal Skills

Delve into the physical nature of singing, focusing on the crucial elements of alignment and how it affects breathing. Explore the relationship between body and voice, gaining a deeper understanding of how physical alignment can positively impact your singing technique. Explore practical ways to include members who have difficulty standing on the risers for rehearsals.

Singing With Heart • Joan Boutilier • Elective

Is expressive singing difficult to draw out of your singers? Storytelling is imaginable for ALL performers. Through sharing, demonstration and participation, explore how to sing with heart by using expressive elements of emotion and applying vocal skills effectively.



Class Descriptions

2:45–3:45 p.m.

Moving DE&I from “Imagine” to Reality • Thérèse Antonini, Jamy Claire Archer, Kathleen Hansen, • DEI

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4–5 p.m.

Imagine If...!

As the education winds down, take this opportunity to connect and network with smaller groups of leaders at your ensembles’ level to discuss how to implement the tools that you have learned to maximize your ensemble’s benefit. Imagine the possibilities...!