



NATS 59th NATIONAL CONFERENCE POSTER PAPER SESSIONS

— *Schedule Subject to Change* —

Poster Paper Session #1

SATURDAY, JULY 4

2-4 p.m.

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Historical Repertoire, Contemporary Pedagogy: Reintroducing the Songs of Elizabeth Turner (d. 1756) in Voice Training Today

Presented by Victo Bento

This poster presents a pedagogically informed modern edition of six songs by the eighteenth-century English composer Elizabeth Turner (d. 1756), integrating historical performance practice and voice pedagogy. It features side-by-side excerpts from the original 1756 publication and the new edition, highlighting editorial choices, pronunciation guidance, and pedagogical applications. The display also outlines how Turner's music can be incorporated into collegiate voice instruction to diversify repertoire and connect historical style with contemporary technique.

Autoimmune Disease and the Sustainability of the Singer

Presented by Sarah Friesen Clucas

This poster explores how autoimmune diseases affect singers' vocal function and career longevity, offering adaptive, evidence-based teaching strategies that promote sustainable and inclusive vocal pedagogy.

Performance and Teaching Careers in the 21st century: The Balancing Act of the Artist Scholar

Presented by André Chiang and Victoria Vargas

This poster will examine the increased prominence and stress on the artist scholar, which is a dual career in academia/private studio and as a freelance performer. We use interviews from a variety of different nationally recognized practitioners to determine commonalities in the stresses and options to deal with them from a career and home life balance standpoint.

Practice Makes Mindful: Mindfulness-Based Interventions on Mental Wellness in Collegiate Vocal Music Students Ages 18–30

Presented by Logan Contreras and Mandy Spivak

This poster will focus on the need and evidence of mental health awareness amongst young singers, and introduce a handbook of mindfulness and meditation practices that voice instructors can implement in the studio to better aid students' individual needs. In the poster, we will cover the necessity of mindfulness techniques and increased mental health awareness amongst young singers age 18-30, the results of a study on the use of mindfulness-based interventions, and ways to implement practices for mental wellness in the voice studio based on our created handbook, *Meditation Practices for the Voice Studio*.

Velopharyngeal Port Opening in Collegiate Western Classical Treble Singers in the Secondo Passaggio (E5 – G5)

Presented by Alice Del Simone

This study investigates whether collegiate Western Classical treble singers vary velopharyngeal port opening when singing through the secondo passaggio (E5-G5). Using a divided air-flow mask with EGG and acoustic measures, the study aims to determine whether there is a significant change in nasalance from C5 to G5 in this population and whether that change correlates to changes in acoustic strategy or laryngeal behavior. Results will help singers and teachers better understand how to navigate the often-challenging secondo passaggio transition.

Songs of Resistance: A Singer's Approach to "The AIDS Quilt Songbook"

Presented by René Eaton and Dana Zenobi

This poster presents a performer's guide to *The AIDS Quilt Songbook*, translating comprehensive musical analysis into clear accessibility ratings for undergraduate singers. Using a rubric adapted from Carol Kimball's five key factors, the guide helps students navigate the challenges of contemporary American art song. The project promotes engagement with queer-centered repertoire and supports more inclusive and diverse voice studio programming.

Vocal Fatigue in the Choral Rehearsal

Presented by Sarah Gould

Developing singers face increased challenges with vocal health as expectations of their instrument increase. This poster will explore research that identifies the causes of vocal fatigue specifically in developing choral singers, vocal injury and paths to recovery, and suggestions for prevention and treatment.

Broadway Survival Guide for Classically Trained Singers: Crossing Over with Pedagogy, Purpose, and a Plan

Presented by Alisa Hauser and Evan T. Jones

The modern demands of a performing career for vocalists are more diverse and segmented than ever before. As traditional, classical collegiate training programs try to accommodate this shift, it is important to address the role of contemporary musical theatre as a viable job opportunity. This poster, created by two leading musical theatre and classical voice professors will highlight the current vocal and performance expectations, as well as provide concise tools to navigate the modern marketplace, to increase success for both classical and musical theatre job opportunities.

Pre-Performance Musical Improvisation and Reduced Performance-Related Anxiety and Cortisol Levels in Classically Trained Vocalists

Presented by Elizabeth Becker, Karen Leigh-Post, and Ryan Saladin

Spontaneous musical improvisation as pre-performance exercise significantly attenuated music performance-related state anxiety in classical voice students, offering an accessible non-medical intervention method. To investigate whether an improvisation exercise using tonal solfège patterns could redirect attention to immediate task planning and reduce performance-induced stress, participants in the study completed mock auditions before and after learning the intervention, with measures including salivary cortisol, state anxiety questionnaires, and flow state assessments. Results showed that the pre-performance improvisation intervention significantly reduced both physiological stress (cortisol levels) and self-reported anxiety from "High" to "Moderate" clinical categories, suggesting that musical improvisation may be an accessible and effective tool for managing performance-related stress and anxiety in singers.

Optimizing Vocal Tone and Clarity: Applying the IPA to Challenges in Chinese Singing

Presented by Xiao Liu

By reframing IPA usage through the lens of vocal communication, this project proposes an adapted phonetic approach to Chinese in classical singing. IPA-annotated examples reveal strategies for enhancing legato, tonal accuracy, and clarity in Chinese art song performance, offering a practical pedagogical model for voice teachers and performers.

Singing in (Ki)Swahili: An Introduction to Pronunciation & the First Swahili Song Cycle

Presented by Sylvester Makobi

This poster includes an introduction to Swahili diction for singers focusing on the first documented Swahili Song Cycle, "Kumbukumbu za Utotoni" by Eddie Baraka Mony.

From The Baltic to The Black Sea

Presented by Lydia Nall

The Poster covers a basic history of several Eastern European countries. It will also describe the characteristics of those nations' folk songs and how it developed into their art song.

Teacher-to-Teacher Mentorship: Strategies for successful collaboration

Presented by Lisa Odom and Justin DeLong

This poster will present a case study of a successful voice-teacher-to-voice-teacher mentoring relationship initiated by the NATS Conference Connections program. The presenters will share how the initial set up led to a successful meeting and the steps they took to nurture and build their mentoring experience into a lasting, mutually-beneficial relationship. They will then extrapolate principles that can be applied to help other teachers create meaningful and lasting mentoring relationships.

Analysis of Effects of Yogic Practices on Singing in Collegiate Singers: A Pilot Study

Presented by Whitney Robinson

The purpose of this study is to determine yogic practices effects on singing. Previous research focused primarily on the effects of long-term intervention and anecdotal evidence suggests that there are vocal benefits to incorporating yogic and mindfulness practices into warm-ups or daily routines. This study will focus on the short-term effects of yogic practices on singing and will help determine if adding yogic practices to a singer's warm-up routine would benefit their singing.

The Liberty Song Project: a collection of personal interpretations, critiques, celebrations, and satirical commentary on the nation's past and present through song

Presented by Carissa Scroggins

Collegiate-level students rewrote "The Liberty Song" as a reflection on their own perspectives on American identity, values, and history. Pieces were performed at the end of the spring 2026 semester. This poster provides examples of submissions and a recording of the performance.

PERSPECTIVES: Stylistic Synthesis and Musical Identity in Chinese Art Songs

Presented by Hexin Qiao and Liangjun Shi

This poster presents a collaborative study by Hexin Qiao and Liangjun Shi on selected Chinese art songs, focusing on their musical structure, text interpretation, and stylistic features. The project highlights key concepts from traditional Chinese vocal pedagogical treatises and examines how these ideas inform contemporary analysis and performance understanding. Visual diagrams and examples are included to illustrate the theoretical framework and analytical approach.

Poster Paper Session #2

SUNDAY, JULY 4

2-4 p.m.

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Art Songs Unlocked: Simplified Accompaniments for the Studio

Presented by Stephanie Beinlich

When faced with the task of accompanying singers in a rehearsal setting, voice teachers that are not proficient pianists must still provide key melodic and rhythmic material to support the student. Often, this involves quickly and efficiently reducing the score to provide the necessary musical elements without disrupting the student's musical autonomy with erroneous playing. With this repertoire collection, we have taken the necessary reduction skills and guesswork out of the equation by providing reduced versions of a selection of standard vocal literature.

Sequencing Vocal Music with Intention: A Rubric-Based Approach for Evaluating Repertoire

Presented by Melinda Brou, Deja Godwin, and Katherine Ragan

This poster presents a newly adapted rubric designed to assist voice professionals in evaluating and sequencing solo vocal repertoire. Adapted from the work of Dr. Nicole Sonbert, this rubric provides structured criteria tailored specifically for high school and early college-level singers, emphasizing vocal technique, musical complexity, and textual content.

Redesigning Vocal Literature Instruction for a Changing Curriculum: A One-Semester Model

Presented by Melinda Brou, Deja Godwin, and Katherine Ragan

In response to student credit hour and faculty load limitations, the Vocal Literature course at Texas A&M University-Kingsville was redesigned as a one-semester, combined graduate and undergraduate experience. This reimagined structure addresses the traditional two-semester model—commonly devoted to French *mélodie* and German *lieder*—which often excludes significant bodies of vocal repertoire and makes space for women and non-western composers.

Software application for measuring the emotional impact of the singing voice

Presented by Andrei Costin Bratan, Catalin Silviu Niculae, and Eduard Franti

This poster presents a software application that measures (on a scale from 1 to 5) in real time the emotional impact of the singing voice (separately for male and female voices). The application helps singers monitor the emotional impact of their voices and to prepare their voices for the concerts they perform.

“Performative Play: Wesley Balk’s Projective Modes for Today’s Singing Studio”

Presented by Madeline Harts

“Performative Play: Wesley Balk’s Projective Modes for Today’s Singing Studio” is a poster paper that examines the “projective modes” introduced by esteemed artistic director and professor Wesley Balk (1932-2003) and a reimagining of these modes for pedagogical use in the private singing studio. “Performative Play” outlines how voice teachers can integrate these modes as a tool with their students, empowering them to develop an understanding of their own learning and performance strengths, while building facility and ease in less dominant modes. An overview of these modes—Hearing/Vocal, Kinesthetic, and Facial/Emotional—and their application to the singing student through technical exercise and repertoire performance will be discussed.

The Paradox of Unlearning: The Invisible Counterpart of Learning

Presented by Michaela Kelly and Christine Li

Unlearning is an essential yet often overlooked and misunderstood counterpart to learning. Rather than approaching students as blank slates, acknowledgement and integration of pre-existing habits and motor patterns can facilitate a holistic view of the individual. By shedding light on unlearning as complementary to learning, voice teachers can draw on its tenets, such as attractor states and constructed memory, to develop new pedagogical approaches that foster more effective motor patterns and skill acquisition in singing.

Temporomandibular Dysfunction's Effect on the Singing Voice

Presented by Sarah Kim

The poster entails what TMJ and TMD are and what the current research shows. It includes numbers and statistics, what the research and facts show which includes the common age and gender of those that have TMD, common symptoms of TMD, vocal elements most affected by TMD, other vocal issues, medical treatment modalities, what research still needs to be done, how to navigate the symptoms, how to educate medical and dental providers that this is important for teachers and students, and finding safe support.

Demanding DEI: Creating Care Initiatives for Emerging Singers and Young Artists of Marginalized Identities

Presented by Danielle Buonaiuto and Maria Maxfield

DEIA initiatives have outcomes that ensure the safety of one of the singing industry's most vulnerable communities: emerging singers and young artists, especially those of marginalized identities. Young artists are systemically and economically precarious as they solidify their artistic voice, their vocal technique and their place within the industry, and have particular needs and priorities which must be met with care by their teachers and employers, and which DEIA initiatives, if deployed conscientiously, can address. Understanding the impact that a systemic lack of care has on our students will aid us as teachers and administrators to cultivate better care initiatives and practices within our organizations and artistic spaces.

Celtic Echoes in the New World: Unveiling the Art Songs of Helen Hopekirk and Amy Beach

Presented by Laura Pritchard and Hannah Roberts

This presentation highlights the overlooked art songs of Amy Beach and Helen Hopekirk, two pioneering composers whose vocal works reveal a rich tapestry of Celtic influence. By examining their musical language, literary inspirations, and cultural context, we uncover how both women helped shape a uniquely American expression of Celtic identity.

Aesthetic Language in Contemporary Musical Theatre Casting Calls: Trends, Functional Labels, and Repertoire Pathways

Presented by Benjamin South

This poster project aims to identify aesthetic trends in the expectations of casting calls over the last five years, define & categorize these trends into labels based on voice function, and finally, offer scaffolded options in repertoire selection to train each of these functions.

A Community-Engaged Model for the Vocal Pedagogy Practicum: Integrating Outreach, Scholarship, and Intergenerational Learning

Presented by Carol McAmis and Ivy Walz

This poster presentation details the pedagogical structure, learning objectives, outcomes, and impact of a community-engaged vocal pedagogy practicum. This particular model serves older adults, and aligned with the theme of the 59th National Association of Teachers of Singing Conference, provides an example of how teaching practices in vocal pedagogy can create pathways for connecting "our artistry across cultures." As a vehicle for community-engaged teaching and research, it provides a study of the longstanding model at Ithaca College, and how that model is expanding at Texas Tech, with recommendations for addressing community needs from the outset of development, along with rubrics for data collection and assessment.

Tongue-tie and singing: Increased vocal tract volume and voice quality after frenectomy of a professional singer

Presented by Katherine Ahn, Jacqueline Ward, Alison Wu

Poster details both the singing symptoms associated with tongue-tie, and the results of treatment of our case study subject. Results affirmed our hypothesis regarding the mechanical interactions in the vocal tract. The vocal tract increased in volume, the larynx positioned lower, and stunning voice changes were observed and measured.

Mindfulness and the Singer: Exploring Needs, Challenges, and Traits in Training and Professional Singers

Presented by Autumn West

The aim of this study is to understand the relationship between mindfulness and the different aspects of a singer's experience in training, practice, performance, and career, and to cultivate resources to train the skill of mindfulness. Survey data widely disseminated to singers and teachers of singing is used to assess the most pressing needs for mindfulness trait strength, and to then develop practical resources tailored to supporting focus, emotional regulation, and well-being in practice, studios, classrooms, rehearsals, performance settings, and career navigation.

#VocalPedagogy: Investigating and Utilizing Social Media as a Pedagogical Tool in the Applied Voice Studio

Presented by Rachel Wood

This project explores the ways voice students increasingly rely on social media for vocal technique and performance, and investigates both its educational opportunities and challenges. Using student surveys and assignments, the project equips students to critically evaluate online content, and to consider how they might integrate these concepts and tools into their own future teaching. Additionally, the project provides strategies for how instructors can utilize social media in the studio and classroom.

Scoliosis, Pain, and Inflammation in Voice Students

Presented by Heather Nelson and Veronika Yerina

The poster will have some visual aids to show spinal alignment and points of pain that most directly affect the singing voice. Additional information pertaining to common areas of spinal pain and related inflammation will be pictured as well. Each picture will have corresponding text explaining the contents of the image as it contributes to the research.

Poster Paper Session #3

MONDAY, JULY 6

2-4 p.m.

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Rediscovering Melesio Morales: Expanding the 19th-Century Operatic Canon for Today's Voice Studio

Presented by Nadia Aguilar-Steinberg

This poster presents new research on the restoration of Melesio Morales's *Romeo e Giulietta* (1863), a largely forgotten opera from nineteenth-century Mexico. Drawing on archival sources and manuscript analysis, the project reconstructs key portions of the score and situates the work within Mexico's evolving cultural and operatic landscape. The study contributes to ongoing efforts to reexamine overlooked Latin American operatic traditions within musicological scholarship.

Voce Moderna: A Contemporary Aria Project

Presented by Katrina Cole and Blair Salter

This poster aims to inform audiences about the database *Voce Moderna*. *Voce Moderna* is an ongoing contemporary aria database with information on repertoire, composers, and librettists. We want people to know about this resource so they can take it back into the studio!

The Historical and Vocal Demands of the Modern Mariachi Singer

Presented by Josaphat Contreras

A Fulbright presentation on the Historical and vocal demands of the Modern Mariachi Singer. Historical performance practices combined with a 10-month study on stylistic and genre specific singing techniques will be presented and give a framework of how a singer can begin to explore Mariachi music that was named a 2011 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Unearthing Poldowski: Technical and Pedagogical Considerations for Voice Teachers

Presented by Emily DeMerchant

This poster will show analysis of 3 pieces by composer Poldowski and show their effectiveness for teaching. It will include a background of the composer, and show 3 of her most prevalent pieces that are present in some anthologies.

Toward an Auto-Classification Process for Singing Voice Respiration Strategies

Presented by Ian Howell

This project develops system-level, quantitative descriptors of singing respiration strategies, addressing the limitations of qualitative, anatomically localized terms such as "appoggio" or "belly out." Dual inductance band signals from ribcage and abdomen are segmented into inhale/suspend/phonate phases, converted to velocity trajectories in RC-AB space, binned into 20-element feature vectors per phase, and compared via multiple

dissimilarity metrics to generate heatmaps and clustering solutions. Preliminary results show internally consistent, phase-specific “fingerprints” that map onto familiar pedagogical descriptions and could, with larger datasets, support a comprehensive, data-driven schema for comparing respiration strategies across singers, tasks, and longitudinal interventions.

Singing in the Dark: A pedagogical approach for teaching a blind singer an opera role

Presented by Karina Lago Disdier

This poster will serve as a resource for directors, vocal coaches, teachers and blind singers so that the blind singer can receive as fair a chance to be onstage as their sighted counterparts. I will discuss ideas for how to teach pitches, rhythms, and lyrics, as well as ways to have your blind singer move around the stage safely. I will also discuss music rehearsals, coachings, blocking, and private lessons and ways to make sure that accessibility and safety are maintained so that the singer can be successful.

Confronting the Unknown: Incorporating Commercial Music into Your Voice Studio or Program

Presented by Emily Hatch, Christopher McKim, and Caitlin Moore

This poster offers a practical roadmap for voice teachers who want to incorporate commercial music into private studios and university programs but feel unsure where to begin. We address repertoire selection, assessment, technology, training resources, and accompaniment/track options, sharing concrete tools that have worked in our own studios. Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with singers reporting greater freedom and authenticity across all genres as a result of this work.

The Montessori Model in Studio Voice: A Structure for Student-Centered Instruction

Presented by Tiffany Nishibun

This poster will have several info graphics and QR codes for teachers to use in studio or to prompt further discovery. It will also include brief biographical content about Maria Montessori for context.

The Vocal Legacy of Bayard Rustin: Tradition, Diversity, and Freedom

Presented by Rebecca Plack

This poster highlights the little-known vocal artistry of civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, whose recordings span Baroque repertoire as well as spirituals. Focusing on his self-accompanied recordings of lute songs — where his phrasing gains striking expressive freedom — this presentation will present historically contextualized audio excerpts as well as pedagogically-framed analysis of Rustin’s technique and phrasing. It will also propose classroom and studio applications, including strategies for encouraging flexible phrasing in student performances.

Enhancing Musicianship Skills While Building Vocal Technique

Presented by Timothy Schmidt

The results of a study exploring the effect of one semester of using only non-major-based warmup/technique patterns in undergraduate voice lessons on musicianship and technical growth. The patterns were reinforced during students' practice sessions. Students were asked to evaluate their musicianship progress compared to previous semesters, and instructor observations regarding musicianship and technical progress were also included in this study.

Icelandic Diction Accessibility for non-Icelandic speaking singers

Presented by Carissa Scroggins

This poster documents the experiences of non-native speakers with Icelandic diction through pictures, videos, audio clips, and reflections. This poster will include a QR code that takes viewers to a website with the mentioned resources and tools used by performers, and a handout will be available.

The Art songs of Eduardo Fabini

Presented by Jennifer Smith

The poster highlights the art songs of Eduardo Fabini (1882-1950) a lesser-known composer from Uruguay. The poster will display highlights from the performance guide I am writing for nine of Eduardo Fabini's beautiful art songs, along with brief biographical information about the composer. The poster's goal would be to help singers become familiar with Fabini's wonderful music.

Beyond the Binary: Best Practices for Affirming Trans and Gender Expansive Singers

Presented by Danielle Cozart Steele, Laura Storm, Danielle Wright, and Dana Zenobi

This poster shares the results of research and programming that explores best practices for affirming trans and gender expansive singers in university settings in the current historical moment. The poster includes the results of a 2025 survey research project and reflections following an in-person "Singing Beyond the Binary" event.

— *Schedule Subject to Change* —

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