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FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF PROLIFIC PRODUCTIVITY by the American Academy of Teachers of Singing (AATS), during which the academy issued several statements of significance to the voice profession, the *Journal of Singing* is pleased to publish three consecutive "NATS Visits AATS" columns. The first, "Choosing a Summer Program: Guidelines for Singers," appeared at the beginning of this publication cycle (*JOS* 77, no. 1 [September/October 2020]: 15–17), and the second, "Mentoring: Take(s) 2," was published in the following issue of the periodical (*JOS* 77, no. 2 [November/December 2020]: 155-158). This last statement of the series was presented in a Zoom session during the 2020 NATS National Virtual Conference.

A history of the Academy and its seminal role in the birthing of NATS may be found in an earlier issue of the journal (*JOS* 77, no. 1 [September/October 2020]: 15). The publication of statements does not imply NATS endorsement, nor does their content necessarily reflect the philosophy of NATS or the *Journal of Singing*. Readers are invited to visit the AATS website (www.americanacademyofteachersofsinging.org).

IN SUPPORT OF TEACHING THE TRANSGENDER-NONBINARY SINGER

As teachers of the art of singing, we serve a long tradition centered on enabling individuals to access their authentic voice through appropriate and healthy technique, thus allowing them to express their deepest thoughts and emotions through song. Every human being deserves this opportunity. In light of this sacred imperative, we, the members of the American Academy of Teachers of Singing fully support the teaching of the transgender-nonbinary singer.

We live in a world constantly impacted by an exponential rate of change that affects every element of our lives. Societal, cultural, and political change and growth impact us daily, and the voice studio is certainly a place where we as teachers must learn to meet the exciting challenges attendant to these changes. Many teachers have embraced the opportunity to expand their teaching skills through continued education in areas of voice science, evidence-based teaching, and specialized training in the teaching of a style of singing with which they have not been previously familiar. The emergence of the transgender-nonbinary singing student, reflecting important changes in societal understanding of gender, presents exciting opportunities for the teaching community. As with any new field, there is a growing interest but still limited understanding of best practice in working with this student demographic.

To better serve the transgender-nonbinary singer, a teacher needs to have some understanding of the unique range of diversity within this community. There are considerations regarding an individual's preferred pronouns, voice range versus chosen *Fach* or vocal identity, gender versus sexual identity. All of these issues and more can play an important role in establishing the open communication and trust that is so vital to the successful voice studio experience.

In 2017, there was an article in the *Journal of Singing* on teaching the transgender-nonbinary singer with an overview of the subject as well as case studies. At the 2018 NATS conference, there was panel of recognized authorities on teaching the transgender-nonbinary singer that covered the subject in a thorough manner. For the past seven years, The Voice Foundation Annual Symposium in Philadelphia has presented research papers, panels, and numerous workshops on the subject of transgender voice. Schools of higher education all are addressing issues of gender identification, and NATS has issued a statement regarding its position on this subject. Earlham College in Indiana has held two Transgender Singing Voice Conferences, in 2017 and 2019

For teachers interested in expanding their pedagogic skills in order to include the transgender-nonbinary singer in the studio, there is an increasing body of written material becoming available. There are workshops being offered, and there are recognized individuals with extensive experience working with this singer population. There is also a need for collaborative research into this area of voice pedagogy utilizing the experience and knowledge of singing teachers, speech language pathologists, laryngologists specializing in voice, as well as voice scientists. As with any area of education, the teacher has a responsibility to have received the relevant training necessary to effectively help a student. While the training opportunities for working with the transgender-nonbinary singer are still evolving, a singing teacher interested in working with this population should pursue the avenues currently available, knowing that even with the best of preparation, there is much knowledge to be gained from the collaborative interaction between a dedicated teacher and an eager student.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

Adler, R. K., S. Hirsch, and J. Pickering. *Voice and Communication Therapy for the Transgender/Gender Diverse Client: A Comprehensive Clinical Guide.* San Diego: Plural Publishing, 2006.

Jackson, L. Hearns, and B. Kremer. *The Singing Teacher's Guide to Transgender Voices.* San Diego: Plural Publishing, 2018.

Sieck, S. *Teaching with Respect: Inclusive Pedagogy for Choral Directors.* Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2017.

ADDITIONAL READING

Aguirre, R. "Finding the Trans Voice: A Review of the Literature on Accommodating Transgender Singers." *Update Applications of Research in Music Education* 37, no. 3 (April 2018).

Bos, N. "Forging a New Path: Transgender Singers in Popular Music." *Journal of Singing* 73, no. 4 (March/April 2017): 421–424.

Lessley, E. "Teaching Transgender Singers." Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Washington, 2017.

Manternach, B., M. Chipman, R. Rainero, and C. Stave. "Teaching Transgender Singers, Part 1." *Journal of Singing* 74, no. 1 (September/October 2017): 83–88.

Manternach, B. "Teaching Transgender Singers, Part 2." *Journal of Singing* 74, no. 2 (November/December 2017): 209–214.

Miller, J. R. "Creating Choirs that Welcome Transgender Singers." *Choral Journal* 57, no. 4 (November 2016): 61–63.

Palkki, J. "Inclusivity in Action: Transgender Students in the Choral Classroom." *Choral Journal* 57, no. 11 (June/July 2017): 20–34.

Sauerland, W. R. "Legitimate Voices: A Multi-Case Study of Trans and Non-Binary Singers in the Applied Voice Studio." Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Teachers College, 2018.

Sims, L. "Teaching Transgender Singers." *Journal of Singing* 73, no. 3 (January/February 2017): 279–282.

Online articles

Bos, N. *Considerations for Teaching Transgender Singers in College Voice.* Vocapedia.info, www.nats.org.

Conley, E. *Creating Gender Liberatory Singing Spaces: A Transgender Voice Teacher's Recommendation for Working with Transgender Singers.* Eli Conley's Blog (October 9, 2017).

Graham, F. A. *Singing while female: A narrative study on gender, identity, & experience of female voice in cis, transmasculine & non-binary singers.* Columbia University (2019); https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/d8-mnh1-st58.

SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AMERICAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION www.asha.org

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING www.nats.org

GLAAD (formally the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) www.glaad.org

NATIONAL CENTER FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY transequality.org

GALA CHORUSES galachoruses.org