



Diversity of singing practices in Europe Leonardo da Vinci program 2013 - 2015

EVTA has been involved with three LEO projects, the first was a singing teacher exchange programme, the second was the digital resources for singing teaching project (these are kept in the archives) and recently we have been partners in this current project.

Brief overview

We began in Barcelona in February 2014 looking at the training paths available for singers in Europe. We discussed all levels of singing from school children to professional singers, both solo and choral, in classical and contemporary genres. We heard some amazing singing from Spanish children's choirs and we also met some excellent presenters who stretched our vocal and imaginative ideas about singing.

Then in May 2014 we were in Aalborg in North Denmark to learn about a very particular and unique distance-learning MA degree at the Music Academy in its wonderful new venue. The title of this session was 'Emerging Aesthetics: pop, jazz, rock'. This proved to be inspirational, seeing the Danish teachers introduce the idea of the *Intelligent Choir*. We learnt about the digital resources they are using to work with students at great distances and this linked perfectly with our previous LEO project where we learnt about the ways to share teaching through Skype. They use an advanced but very effective programme called Adobe Connect. We heard some wonderful 'A Capella' singing groups and we were fully exercised with movement classes in rhythmic skills, circle songs, improvisation and conducting.

In October 2014 a large group of us went to Tours to discuss 'Collective practices'. This examined choral singing but also the connections with solo singing and EVTA contributed much to the sessions which were run in parallel with AFPC, our French members. We heard some amazing choirs, both professional and amateur. We explored the singing that takes place in cultural contexts, inner cities, with immigrants, hospitals, prisons, therapeutic situations. So it was a very broad overview of the kind of singing that takes place in Europe in all its diversity. The session also ended with a major choral festival at St.Lo.

Last March (2015) the final full session took place in Freiburg in the Black Forest. This was an opportunity to look at our co-operation within the European networks. We looked at marketing skills and how major music festivals are organised. But we also did a lot of singing, beat boxing and overtone singing. The networks we have made over all the LEO projects have been really dynamic and this project was no exception. As a result we are able to suggest new projects and we hope to take this form of European co-operation even further in the future.

Our final meeting in Copenhagen was an opportunity to write the final report, with prospects for further cooperation and recommendations to EU and local governments, quite a monumental task but an important one as the funding we receive helps us to finance a level of activity that would be impossible without the EU grants.

The following reports reflect the intense nature of our work and the notes that I took during the four working sessions. Susan Yarnall Monks - Secretary EVTA

Leo Sings in Aalborg Denmark 7/5/14-11/5/14 – Shorter Report

On reflection this was a good session, well organised and not a moment wasted, with lots of music making to take part in and to listen to. There was a mix of observation, lecture and participation but less interaction and cross-fertilisation of ideas due to the very nature of the purpose of this session. I hope Tours will allow more sharing of expertise amongst participants.



Much of what we learnt could be adapted to 'classical' singing and solo singing, so it is relevant to more than just choral and 'rhythmic music'. I do think we need to help to make the 'singing' brain be switched on for choir leaders. It is not enough to say 'but I'm not interested in vocal technique – I leave that to others'.

Just a few basic principals are needed to keep a look out for:

- Breath and physical engagement
- Posture and laryngeal freedom
- Timbre and tone colours
- Balance and body energy
- Release and the use of muscle strength
- Resonance and acoustic feedback

Internal and external auditory perception was touched on briefly by Jim at the the very beginning but this is a very important area for choir and solo singers and it is often misunderstood. Linking it to performance space which we heard from Astrid would give a powerful message to choir directors/conductors who sometimes ignore the acoustic possibilities and the dangers of vocal strain.

Musikkens Hus Prof. Jim Daus Hjerno

Wednesday evening: introduction and shared meal and jazz trio concert

The music school is near the waterfront in Aalborg. It is a very new building just opened in March 2014. It is rather grey and concrete but a very interesting architectural design with good facilities. A new programme for the session was given out as there were some additions plus a feedback booklet for everyone and a contact list of participants.

Jim explained the RAMA had an old, rather small building before. The new building has RAMA with 100 students and 25 on the further education programme plus the University of Music and the Aalborg symphony orchestra with 1000 seating concert hall and large church organ. It is called Musikkens Hus.

In 2010 there was a fusion with Aarhus music academy and they run a Bachelor degree 3 years 180 ECTS points and a Masters 2 years 120 ECTS points. Soloist degree in choral conducting, singing etc. 2 years advanced post graduate course in music. Also 'Inspiration' courses with no auditions, 1 weekend or several weekends for a specific topic- like a taster.

Diploma and professional master students meet every 2nd month and have long distance learning and coaching. 60 ECTS half time study 2 years. 12 modules. Resident teachers team up with partners across US and Europe to give a broad programme.

The aim of LeoSings here in Aalborg is to learn by doing and having discussions so that we move forward. We will be having some observations of the classes taking place with distance learning students this weekend.

Stéphane Grosclaude the Co-ordinator spoke of the purposes of LEOSings, which are to bring potential partners together so that we can further the singing amongst us. Sharing multiple experiences at all levels and styles to strengthen singing in society and to build cooperation with all concerned in music making and singing by creating resources, establishing an inventory of diploma courses across Europe and to write recommendations for local authority governments and networks.



Here in Aalborg we have the opportunity to see the new aesthetics in singing with choirs, namely pop, rock and jazz or as they are called here in Denmark 'Rhythmic Music'. In Tours (October 2014) the session will focus on managing collective vocal practice and in March 2015 in Freiburg, it will concern cooperation and networks, professional integration, careers and other vocal practices.

Stéphane stressed this was work in progress with an emphasis on group participation.

Booklets were given out with 4 questions to consider for each presentation to help focus questions for participants so that we have feedback.

1. What would be interesting to develop for LEOSings concerning this workshop/presentation?
2. What did you learn from this workshop/presentation?
3. What can you retain and integrate into your vocational training/practice?
4. Have you any comments or suggestions related to the training course at the Royal Academy of Music in Aalborg?

Thursday 8th Musikkhus 9.30 am

Methodology rock/pop/jazz choir

Jim heard in 2002 Bobby McFerrin in Minneapolis and since then has spent 12 years implementing improvisation in vocal music in his teaching.

Students are given a range of skills, conducting and rehearsing skills, plus guest teachers - as many as possible.

In Denmark pop/rock/jazz = rhythmical music.

Steady pulse, groove, etc.

Jim believes in giving progression; finding goals are part of his approach and he claims the opposite of 'intelligent choir' is an 'unprepared choir'!

Jim believes it is important to get rid of the sheet music: you must learn steady pulse music from the heart using the body.

- Rhythm
- Sound
- Blend
- Interpretation

These 4 headlines help to focus the choir training so that the intelligent choir knows exactly how to do the music, one headline at a time. Coaching even in larger choirs, so it's like orchestra, 1st violin, following one musician at specific points in vocal parts.

What is 'groove'?

It must start before the music. Jim starts with basic training a couple of months before doing a piece with a specific groove. A groove is the engine of music. Groove could be a style based division of beat. Get the groove to rock! When music becomes audible it draws you in, enables you to relax.

The DNA of the groove equals the audible subdivisions! Accents play a role in defining the style.

The small things around the music you must understand so you feel the accents.



Physical ear training

Basic steps

1. Afro 2. Gospel 3. Half time 4. Back beat

Add ghost notes (improvised fills based on subdivisions)

Hand sign filter - Jim uses a lot of hand signs for pitch and rhythm patterns so there is not so much thinking!
Good tools for beginner choir.

Energising by taking out the pitches if you are trying to swing and be straight with singers. So there is a complex relationship between pitch and rhythm. The energising sign was a clenched fist, it is meant to remove the tones and pitches and concentrate on the rhythm.

The Hand is the 5 lines meaning sing in pitch and three horizontal fingers means sing in harmony. Waving arm is the adding of subdivisions. Ghost notes to get the real feel the groove. (I think this is what we would say or the slides and glides).

The externalisation of the audible subdivisions.

Jim devised the finger patterns

Di – 1 finger

Dida – 2 fingers

Digadaga – 4 fingers

Dibada - 3 fingers hanging down for triplet

Pre exercise for vocal percussion.

Jim mentioned Sound painting by Walter Thompson soundpainting.com 1200 different sounds

Jim also used hand signs for Pitch intonation do re me system and Doh is flexible.

Using soundpainting sounds and other sounds to change the timbre; Jim explained this might take 6-12 months of training. Choose Presidents in a group to give free style signs for ah eee ooo and oom. Over time this builds up the confidence of the shyest singers. Free improvisation as well. Using Pentatonic scale.

This was a very useful session and it gave me ideas about approaching teaching in a choral and in a solo singing session. It is not exclusively for jazz music but can be easily adapted for any kind of musicianship/aural training.

Vocal Jazz Touché Jesper Holm

Jesper Holm: teaching in choral music about rhythmical conducting.

Leading music by doing music together; Jim does more improvised music without score but in Jesper's classes there is mostly sheet music.

What is unique in vocal jazz?

Harmonic complexity

Jazz phrasing

Swing feeling

How do we make the jazz sound as a choir?

Swing feeling, groove, jazz phrasing



Sound blend breathy/ no vibrato/ instrument imitation/ microphones
Harmonic complexity and how to deal with it?

Vocal groups he admires:

HiLos from the fifties
Singers Unlimited from sixties
Manhattan Transfer
New York voices
Swingle Singers
Vocal Line

"It sounds so easy when you get it right. I gotta to do this music! How do I make my key? 1 2 3"

1. Attack exactly the same time
2. Exactly the same tone, colour, timbre
3. Release exactly the same time

Plus harmonic understanding

Exercises with harmonic challenges so vertical as well as horizontal
What is my function in this chord?

We have to practice to make this sound great knowing where we are in the chord. We worked on various chord patterns feeling the sound of where we were in the chord.

As a conductor only do what you need to do; rather than being a mad arm-waving man.

How to swing like a big band?

Jazz phrasing

Accents

On/behind the beat

Saxophone patterns

Ve Va Vu Vap

It's in the texture too because a is louder than e - *an interesting comment on vowel colour*

Can it be negotiated on stage? Yes - You show them with your body.

Do you have lead alto or is it you deciding the phrasing?

It is this specific detailed work that is the same as good classical singing because it is part of a very close study of the music.

Link: You tube Touché and the Danish Big Band live concert 2012

Use of shadowing voices, a good discipline to help singers listen to each other to copy the sound and rhythm and phrasing.

I would use this trio idea to get singers really listening with classical song and tuning into the vowels and empathetic feeling with the phrasing. Following each other and using the ears.

Break



Astrid Vang-Pedersen Performance Design

PhD on concert design is Astrid 's research and she gave us some examples using big and small venues. Performance fixed tension in classical concerts? Audience is one factor building acoustic and performer but is it like a museum? Surprise and sensuous interaction can be helpful in establishing an ensemble identity. Also important to think about the entering and exiting from a concert and the narratives that are being explored. She had seen quite a variety of approach, performing in the dark, in unusual venues, scattered amongst the audience etc. Who is the performance designer, concert designer????

Practical part of session:

Small group work in 3 beats making sounds on each number, making our bodies used to this connection from top to the bottom because in the western world we don't have that body connection.

Head torso hips downwards are grounding. Sing it from your heart (torso) or ethereal sound or the grounding. Different physical senses, just walk to start with.

1. Imagine you are a bear with lots of muscle and weight - heavy feeling around hip but get ready to attack!
2. Back to natural and be yourself neutral
3. Now no weight as light as a feather, butterfly, you are ready to take off, you could lift anyone, suddenly it becomes quiet in the room
4. Back to neutral what's your mood, happy, tired, gloomy?
5. In a river up to the knees, we have to push through the water, water getting higher, in order to move your legs you have to move through the water, more energy. There's resistance. Water is going down again.
6. Neutral on dry land
7. Dense forest, branches are very low, we have to get down very low, we become monkeys, thigh muscles are very strong
8. Back to neutral

Find a spot where you would like to sing. Good for moving on stage, a little more flimsy if we rush. So our gestures can have resistance in order to get the music across. Find a friend and try to mirror each other. You are releasing more energy, good atmosphere, safe environment among the singers. If I feel exposed it won't work, to create an atmosphere of trust - to team build.

I cannot move too fast so that she can mirror me. Keep a flow in the movement. Taking turns and then doing together.

Focus - The centre solar plexus or below the navel. It's a sensation or feeling. Used for focus to centre ourselves as ensembles. Centre is also a drive it can help us take the stage. Gravity I am bound to perform. Walking from the pelvis. When we take a room our head goes first so my head goes in first. But if I want to show I am feeling I am more balanced. I want to feel the hip bone walk normally I am trying to give the resistance. Ask someone to hold your hips as you walk and then after a short while release their hands and it feels very different ... more freedom. Good exercise for helping students about walking on stage. An image of how to get a walk onto the stage.

Resistance is so good as a source of creating energy.

Power poses and anti power poses. There is a website apparently and some interesting research - (Exercise do 5 power poses and see what happens in job application conversations.)

In pairs, cross legs, slouch, cross areas and talk, this is anti power - I suspect the voice will be weaker.



Now do a power pose chest up arms on hips and strong legs so voice is louder.

Who are we expressing to? Attention - where are we putting our attention.

The work of Stanislavsky: it's not to be an 'actor' but to be true to yourself and be more aware. He works with circle or hula hoops and spotlights. Spotlight is on me not self-promoting. What is my state of mind state of body? Close our eyes and listen to our own breathing move from circle 1 and then increase the circles.

1. Listening to sounds in the room
2. Listening to the sounds inside you
3. Direct attention to muscles and feeling of body
4. Think of a place or a thing that is personal for you, a feeling of peace, at home or in nature and imagine that place, or a thing...if this is connected to sound then think about the sounds and the smells. Almost smell hear and see inner picture. Can you make that sensation of peace in your body now?
5. Open your eyes and keep that vision in you
6. Walk around with your hula hoop around you.
7. Meet someone's eyes and send your story to them
8. Move into circle 2 - I am now noticing more people around me.
9. Now the eye contact is the most important thing, you become a bit more present with other people and leave yourself a bit.
10. Stop with the eye contact. We are dependent on other people. How much flow can you make? (so the powerful people can keep the flow going)
11. People become very focused, we leave our own attention in order to be communicants....
12. There are many levels in this exercise

In two groups now:

The stopping game, there was a rhythm and a pattern in the end. Going slow and going fast. I am a follower or a leader. Today in rehearsal I am not going to be the leader.

Awareness of our groups allowing different people to blossom. Use the breath and your low back to choreograph the song.

Level 3 the last circle is the bodily one. I have an audience behind me. Balance the space!

Standing on a board on a ball. There is a ball underneath the stage. You must balance the stage so it doesn't tilt.

Fuzz ball or dust bunnies, there is a crowd in the middle. Energy in the centre of the song and then in the next song create space is very exciting in concert management.

4th circle is not just the performance hall...so it's the whole wide world. Music creates intensity and it is powerful on a higher level. Why are we doing this concert? Specific theme to create a feeling. Can be fun and can a great team feeling not be always serious?

Stage setting for one song: stand like this we are on circle one or circle three in phrasing. Try to think about a context of the whole songs, the whole programme, so you get a perspective on the songs in a concert for which you need all four circles. Use set lists and narratives when we create concert programmes.



In terms of the choir it is all about how much the singers take responsibility and the skills we are giving them to do this. As well as how we lead the singers. It is good to have the physicality engaged and also the power poses to establish the places of energy in the music and you can give a quick sign to initiate some emotional, social, and interpretative aspects of the musical landscape.

Taking the first movement of Vivaldi Gloria without the sheet music, gave it more power.

Different norms with instruments but you can make them sit in different positions, they stand, or they switch on a light when they play.

I have given much of the detail of this class because it was so good and because so much was relevant to any vocal student not just choirs. Planning and preparing for performance and having clear ideas that might challenge the perceptions of an audience and create new ways to communicate through song.

Plenum

Ineke van Doorn gave a 15 minute talk on teaching pop and jazz singing in the Netherlands

In 1998 she was one of the first to graduate in pop and jazz singing and she still performs and she explained some of the problems she has experienced trying to get contemporary music onto the curriculum.

Students 'speed dating'

This was an opportunity to ask the students what they felt about the course. So we went around the room asking students about the distance learning course at RAMA.

Mariagerfjord Pigeekor Girls Choir gave a very exciting performance in the new concert hall.

Friday 9th

Distance learning with Jim

Jim showed us the iMac and Skype session with Adobe Connect - It takes a couple of months for students to get used to the technology. They have 70 students on this distance learning course. Several students can join in like a fly on the wall to their fellow students' tutorials.

You can't sing and play together so it's like Skype but you can have a conversation. There are notes on the screen from different teachers. For students from Cepravo there can be several meetings, a lecture, or power point slides, white board etc. which are automatically saved. There is also a chat field so while we are watching a video we can add comments or we can also do Skype. 'Adobe Connect' is the name, the RAMA bought it - it is quite expensive but it is really worth it and they feel the students feel they can really belong to the institution. They can upload the PDF scores of the video so the scores are accessible as well.

They use it for following up as it is very intense as a teaching tool. So they come for the weekend and are then given tasks to work with their choir. They can only coach choirs using this tool. Learning from watching the video themselves. Motivating as it stands. It is only supporting the weekend events. Video is good for details. They only have 1 hour maximum per teacher per month. So 30 minutes video and 30 minute feedback.



By holding the recording device i.e. Zoom to be transferred between parts you can get some interesting recordings. In Tours there will be a live coaching session.

This revealed what technology can do for distance learning situations, a very powerful tool!

Mariagerfjord Pigekor Girls Choir leader Signe Sorensen

Signe explained there are 3 choirs with different age ranges in her school which is in a farming community: there is lots of football for the boys and so the choir is for the girls. They do 46 concerts each year and they hope to go out into Europe and the world. Not all are big light shows as last night, some are small acoustic concerts.

7 years ago she started working with young kids. The Choir director is in the middle and it feels safe and the conductor can keep control. When we do contemporary music that model is fine in rehearsal but not appropriate for contemporary music. Help the choir do it on their own. How does she do this with children? Young kids singing directly to you as in the concert last night. So that set up a whole different way of communicating.

Communication

1 way or 2 ways how she does that with 64 kids. Sign language. She uses a lot of 5,3,1 fingers to do sound checks. Discipline she doesn't like that word she prefers responsibility. There is a big emphasis on practising team work. They always sit well, so they are very focused in rehearsal. So she believes don't take bad posture as a given.

She asked them "How much energy do you use in self-evaluation compared to the energy given out?" 90 / 10 %.

With teenage kids it is very important to meet them where they are. She developed the idea of status.

Status 12345 this idea of status helps to get them to see the difference - it takes them 1 minute. Status 1 is slumped and disinterested etc. So the lone singer will follow the others. But it must be status 35 every week off stage before they can do status 5 on the stage.

It's a lot about being focused. There are audio files on the website, so the girls need to learn this by heart by next week. So no note bashing.

They practice because they cannot help singing at home, because the music is what they want to sing! Process and the results - some people work for the process some work for the results! Signe works for the process.

We live in a world that is full of rich people who are individuals and we are so important because we work together as a team! She gave an example of singer who was very angry and who has been transformed by the choir.

Having the choir the previous evening we were really interested in how she got such good results and she gave us an interesting perspective. She is a true credit to the RAMA course and she wants to start a singing school for this kind of music. I felt it would be good to give the girls some classical singing as well to broaden their education. She herself leaves all the singing tuition to a vocal coach who gives the girls 1-1 lessons.



Recording contemporary vocal music

Henrik Birk Aaboe

Henrik was a music student now a sound engineer, composer, arranger, technician, teacher, producer etc.

Recording is like links in a chain.

1. Pro tools digital - define your project.
 1. Is it pop, gospel, a capella; have you got pioneers? Do you have references like Vocal Line perhaps you like that sound? ...
 2. Who's performing amateurs, professionals, children?
 3. Is it a demo or a goal? CD or iTunes; a process learning tool or result oriented?
 4. What's possible?
 5. Where, when, how? Expect discipline from your choir, plan the timeline, establish good vibes
 6. Cue tracks or guiding tracks????
 7. Is it necessary?
 8. Cue tracks helps to keep intonation clean and stops you going flat
 9. Does it kill the music ? Yes but only if you know how to use them.
 10. When should it be used? Almost everything
 11. How should it sound? You have got to do the groove not lean on the groove. The whole sound spectrum so you have a big variation of a full sound. Be careful with the high treble sound it can come through the recordings
 12. What about dynamics?
 13. Changes in tempo? Does it feel natural?
 14. How can the singers sing with it? Please rehearse weeks before.
 15. Record the band before hand

2. Set-ups

1. Traditional tutti choir
2. Modern pop rock one mike per singer
3. Dub method
4. You could do all three combined

Decatry - Ambient sound of whole choir. 3-1 rule if the sound is muddy. (Distance between two mikes should be 3 times the distance between the mike and the singer.) He talked about having 5-10 mikes. Especially condenser microphones, 3 per vocal part.

3. Basic recording

1. Be open minded maybe you need to change the vowels
2. Division of parts and sections
3. Who's to hear who?
4. Know your choir

Dub recordings

1. Who's to wait?
2. When to dub?

4. Editing process

1. Selecting takes - I prefer to listen to the energy and the groove I can correct pitch and rhythm later
2. Automatic auto tune don't use it if you want to be musical



3. Timing

Mostly choirs fall in pitch. It's a matter of good taste.

5. The mixing process

1. Visions - the story to be told?
2. References and role models
3. Basic sounds - group faders so first sopranos together.
4. Creating a space for all elements
5. The dynamic lines s and t endings

6. The mastering process the final sound check

1. Last sound check on different speakers
2. The relative volume between the songs
3. The gaps and transitions
4. Formalities coding of the album so there is a digital mark for each song when played on the radio
5. The loudness war!

Some people felt this session was too technical, others not enough but it was clearly presented and I felt it gave a good overview for choral directors who might be thinking about recording their choir.

First lesson observation with distance learning students and Jim

Improvisation 4-8 minutes was the task.

Small group of 8 so they all begin with an obstinato on her instructions with hand signs

Do the group develop the improvisation? A little rhythm process going on but some changes took place.

Using the hand signs that Jim used.

Norwegian girl next started very differently much more unison sharing of primitive obstinato.

The second lesson observation involved preparing a score for performance.

Not really any kind of attention as to how they were using their voices and so some of them were singing not particularly well. They are working for an exam on Sunday about improvisation so perhaps because their focus is on that they have switched off their singing brains.

Aural exercises with Jesper Falch Workshop

All on African walk pulse. Clapping and patterns in a long line and also in a square and with Michael Jackson, superman poses, high fives etc. and on the 1st beat on each side and samurai, cowboy and girlish pose. Mostly rhythm not pitch exercises but great fun.

This was a very physical session, Dalcroze Eurhythmics to rock, so nothing new but some modern references which we all liked and I am sure children would too.

In the evening we had two concerts, first from Dopplers an acoustic young choir of 10 singers from Copenhagen led by Astrid. Their concert was very varied and a change from all the 'groove' music we



had had all day. Some lovely contrasts of timbres and tone and a little more poetry! Not all the singers were technically secure but as they were young and very enthusiastic the concert was a great success. After a break we had Vox North and this began with a lovely gentle song with the 3 female singers including Astrid. This group was started by Jim and they use microphones and sound effects. The programme was varied and interesting and we heard the beat box man who we will hear on Saturday.

Saturday 10th

French partners meeting first

Vocal arranging with Malene Rigtrup

Link Youtube: Imogen Heap clip 'Just for now'

A lot on production and presentation, all very clever, what does it all mean, how deep are the meanings? There are layers of loops. Why do you need a choir when you can do it all with backing tracks and loops? As rhythmic choir leaders we need to make the music ourselves. In classical music you can just go to the library?

What happens when you make a vocal arrangement of a piece and it doesn't work? Malene offered some of her approaches to vocal arranging.

Arranger equals composer

A vocal idea

An independent vocal expression

The voice as a starting point

Re-arrangement

Viva la Vida by Coldplay. But also done by Vocal Line (*it is based on a Spanish phrase and a Freda Kahlo painting, so lots of layers to, I checked on Wikipedia interesting that they think Se tu m'ami influenced the melody and knowing that Chris Martin was learning Arie Antiche at the same time with Mary Hammond that is really interesting. Also so much linked with Christian imagery and used for Olympics etc.*)

Malene had asked a student to find the most used song they can think of, make a vocal arrangement with your own personal touch. "Feel free to change anything." She illustrated this with *Tears in heaven* Eric Clapton an evergreen and a classic song changed to an R & B groove new arrangement. Student kept the chords, used an Alicia/ Beyoncé timbre; she built it up from mezzo to sop altos and then all men on bass line and then men on the melody. A good example on how to re-invent the song.

Neil Sedaka 'Breaking up is hard to do' such a happy song to sad words. Malene made a new arrangement which she gave us to sing, changing the mood of the music.

She took the piano part of *Blue* by Joni Mitchell and vocalised it to make it more equal in the parts adding a lot of blue and water ideas. She uses intuition – "it is the same room I enter when I am composing as it is when I arrange".

Crucify Tori Amos (1990s)



Malene explained Tori was a prodigy playing Chopin at 5 and she has tension/ redemption probably coming from classical music. She uses a lot of timbres and plays with vowel colours. She wanted to make an arrangement with the tension/redemption aspect emphasised.

Vocal Book www.malenerigtrup.dk

This session from Malene I had not expected to be so interesting but the way she spoke about her approach to arranging made me re-think how I approach teaching some songs both modern and classical.

Beatbox sounds with RoxorLoops

He certainly knows how to use the larynx to make sounds and it takes him two months to create a new sound. E learnt a lot about the history and the different sounds which are difficult to put down on paper.

It's not so relevant for me, but I can see parallels and it is good for singing teachers to be aware of these vocal experiments such as in Vienna in Leo2. I was impressed with how he knew what he was doing and doing it safely. He demonstrated lots of funny sounds which sounded amazing but whether I would want to make them is another matter. It is a bit like Louis Armstrong making new sounds with his voice. The dentist sound, Donald Duck and vibrate it with a high pitch sound. Click rolls and breathing in the sound. And vocal fry.

TCHelicon Jes Vang

Trademark technology, vocal processing, floor and touch processes. Adaptive tone, harmonies, you can be your own backing group, and it can be used on the stage. Access to edit, helps you be creative. You cut out the sound guy and so you have control. It boosts confidence you still have to be able to sing it just helps with processing. Reverbs and delays it is used principally. The danger is that it can be all gloss and spin and no content. Something that sounds professional but it doesn't mean you are a good musician or even a good singer.

But people can be one man bands but again that is the individualisation of the whole process.

Really good book given to us all for free, very kindly which featured Mary Hammond and Ingo Titze giving advice.

Nina Lange on vocal technique for Rock/Pop/Jazz

This was a disappointing session because it did not illuminate our understanding but I would think got people muddled. It was sort of Estill based but not very clearly with a few laryngoscope videos badly explained and over simplifying the vocal technique.

She said we all want the same safe and colourful sound but I did not really feel she understood what this whole project was about and we didn't get a clear picture of how much 1-1 singing technique the students get, though they do get it but in what 'method'? that is the thing that concerned the singing teachers among us.

Peder Karlsson on singing creatively and the organic choir

Human metronome exercise.



La Sagrada Familia it is the first collaborative art inspired by nature. Gaudi knew that it would take 150 years and he trusted to leave his legacy
"My client is not in a hurry." Gaudi

Organic Choir is a philosophy of his ideas.

1. Collaborative creativity
2. Integration classes
3. Local community activities
4. Children maybe from 3 years and up
5. Junior high school, high school

Peder is writing a book possibly collaboratively on a website. He believes in Rotated leadership, taking turns; he doesn't like hierarchy like military models and he is not happy with triangles, based on dominance, the myth of men over women etc. but the non-violent guerrilla and circular power sharing. He was involved in the Real Group, a Swedish Vocal harmony group for over 30 years.

We are all born creative and he has set up for management and business people as well as choirs:
Creative workshops 1#

- 2-6 persons per table
- One table master who is allowed to say Stop
- Two papers at each table: any topic and a specific topic
- Allowed response is yes or maybe
- Go to the table that applies to your idea
- Trigger and then the party and then you got a whole lot of ideas so then you can process and apply solutions and apply this in concert.
- Practice not saying no!!!

He is working with one of the young students from the Aalborg course, Merel is moving on from the rhythmic choir ideas, following Peder's ideas into the creative choir which she is starting as part of her MA thesis. She hopes to use organic and original with a max 25 singers but a choir not a vocal group using Classical singers, instrumentalists and rhythmic singers.

This was a stimulating session because it got us to think about the philosophical basis behind what we do and would apply to all kinds of musical situations.

Concert

The concert by Touché was excellent and some very good singing in close harmony. All jazz classics but very good instrumental/big band voice sounds and solos and free improvisation and a very professional presentation.

It was decided to cancel Sunday morning's plenum as Julio from Interarts really needed more time to prepare his report and everyone was very tired. So the Saturday afternoon plenum was used to show the skills of the film makers chosen to represent the project and for a brief intro to the next session in Tours from Celine and then we had another world cafe (that was so successful in getting ideas flowing in Barcelona.)



We decided the following topics as there had not been time to gather questions from everyone.

1. What have you learnt about the new aesthetics here in Aalborg
2. What has been helpful in terms of developing choir conducting, or what more have you learnt about choir conducting?
3. How can we move up a level or develop further our ideas on vocal education?
4. New technology?

I moderated the discussion on vocal education and we had many ideas, similar to Barcelona but also new thoughts too.

We had a group photo and then went over to the nearest hotel for a group meal which was accompanied by much talking and singing and networking.