



# Vocal Jazz in the Choral Curriculum

## Repertoire for your Concert Choir

Kathleen Shannon, R & R Chair for Vocal Jazz, Delaware ACDA  
assisted by Martin Lassman, Treasurer, Delaware ACDA  
Voices United Conference August 13, 2016

[kathleenmshannon@gmail.com](mailto:kathleenmshannon@gmail.com)

<http://deacda.org/index.html>

# Selecting Repertoire - Where to Start

## Great American Songbook

- ▶ A recognized musical canon encompassing critically acclaimed, significant songs written during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- ▶ Synonymous with the concept of the American “standard”
- ▶ Sources include Broadway, Tin Pan Alley, Hollywood musical films, songs written for specific famous singers
- ▶ The availability of sheet music, the advent of recording technology and the birth of radio and television helped to bring this music to a wide audience.

# Irving Berlin (1888-1989)

Berlin wrote most of his own lyrics, except as noted

- ▶ *Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better*
- ▶ *Blue Skies*
- ▶ *Cheek to Cheek*
- ▶ *Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)*
- ▶ *God Bless America*
- ▶ *Happy Holiday (Bing Crosby)*
- ▶ *How Deep Is The Ocean*
- ▶ *I Got the Sun In the Morning and the Moon At Night*
- ▶ *I Love A Piano*
- ▶ *It's A Lovely Day Today*
- ▶ *I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm*
- ▶ *Let's Face The Music And Dance*
- ▶ *Play A Simple Melody*
- ▶ *Puttin' On The Ritz*
- ▶ *Sisters*
- ▶ *Steppin' Out With My Baby*
- ▶ *There's No Business Like Show Business*
- ▶ *They Say It's Wonderful*
- ▶ *Top Hat, White Tie and Tails*
- ▶ *What'll I Do?*
- ▶ *White Christmas*

# Jerome Kern (1885-1945)

Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II wrote five musicals together, including *Show Boat*.  
Kern and Dorothy Fields collaborated on several Hollywood films.

- ▶ *All The Things You Are* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *A Fine Romance* (Fields)
- ▶ *I Told Every Little Star* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *I Won't Dance* (Hammerstein, Fields, Harbach, McHugh)
- ▶ *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *Look For The Silver Lining* (DeSylva)
- ▶ *Pick Yourself Up* (Fields)
- ▶ *The Way You Look Tonight* (Fields)

# George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Ira Gershwin was George's primary lyricist.  
That's the case for all of these songs but one.

- ▶ *A Foggy Day*
- ▶ *But Not For Me*
- ▶ *Embraceable You*
- ▶ *Fascinating Rhythm*
- ▶ *I Got Rhythm*
- ▶ *I've Got A Crush On You*
- ▶ *Let's Call The Whole Thing Off*
- ▶ *Love Is Here To Stay*
- ▶ *Nice Work If You Can Get It*
- ▶ *A Real American Folk Song Is A Rag*
- ▶ *S'Wonderful*
- ▶ *Slap That Bass*
- ▶ *Somebody Loves Me* (DeSylva)
- ▶ *Someone To Watch Over Me*
- ▶ *Strike Up The Band*
- ▶ *They Can't Take That Away From Me*

# Richard Rodgers (1902-1979)

Rodgers partnered with Lorenz Hart 1919-1943.

Rodgers partnered with Oscar Hammerstein II 1943-1960

- ▶ *Blue Moon* (Hart)
- ▶ *Cockeyed Optimist* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *Do Re Mi* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *Getting To Know You* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *Happy Talk* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *I Could Write A Book* (Hart)
- ▶ *I Enjoy Being a Girl* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *I Whistle A Happy Tune* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *If I Loved You* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *In My Own Little Corner* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *It Might As Well Be Spring* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *It's A Grand Night For Singing* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *Johnny One-Note* (Hart)
- ▶ *June Is Busting Out All Over* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *Manhattan* (Hart)
- ▶ *The Most Beautiful Girl In The World* (Hart)
- ▶ *Mountain Greenery* (Hart)
- ▶ *My Favorite Things* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *My Funny Valentine* (Hart)
- ▶ *My Romance* (Hart)
- ▶ *Out of My Dreams* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *People Will Say We're In Love* (Hammerstein)
- ▶ *This Can't Be Love* (Hart)
- ▶ *Where or When* (Hart)

# Cole Porter (1891-1964)

Porter wrote his own lyrics.

- ▶ *Another Op'ning, Another Show*
- ▶ *Anything Goes*
- ▶ *Be A Clown*
- ▶ *Don't Fence Me In*
- ▶ *From This Moment On*
- ▶ *I Love Paris*
- ▶ *I've Got You Under My Skin*
- ▶ *It's Alright With Me*
- ▶ *It's De-Lovely*
- ▶ *Just One Of Those Things*
- ▶ *Night And Day*
- ▶ *Sentimental Journey*
- ▶ *So In Love*
- ▶ *Where Or When*
- ▶ *You're the Top*

## Other Significant Composers and Lyricists

- ▶ **Harold Arlen** (1905-1986): *Ac-cent-tchu-ate The Positive* (Mercer), *Get Happy* (Koehler), *I've Got The World On A String* (Koehler), *My Blue Heaven* (Blane), *My Shining Hour* (Mercer), *Paper Moon* (Rose & Harburg), *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* (Harburg), *Stormy Weather* (Koehler)
- ▶ **Hoagy Carmichael** (1899-1981): *Georgia On My Mind* (Gorrell), *Lazy River* (Arodin), *The Nearness of You* (Washington), *Skylark* (Mercer)
- ▶ **Jimmy McHugh** (1894-1969): *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* (Fields), *On the Sunny Side of the Street* (Fields)
- ▶ **Jimmy Van Heusen** (1913-1990): *Come Fly With Me* (Cahn), *Darn That Dream* (DeLange), *Here's That Rainy Day* (Burke), *My Kind of Town* (Cahn), *Pocket Full of Miracles* (Cahn), *Swinging On A Star* (Burke)



# Stylistic Expectations

## ▶ Choral Tone - The “Truths” of Good Choral Tone regardless of genre

- ▶ Same pitch, same vowel, same volume with section mates
- ▶ Maintain all habits of healthy tone production
- ▶ Sing with an energized sound

## ▶ Some Differences

- ▶ Bright tone on most up-tempo songs
- ▶ Inside mouth space becomes more horizontal than vertical

## ▶ Choral Diction

- ▶ A more “conversational” approach
- ▶ Emphasize beginning consonants  
De-emphasize (or close) ending consonants
- ▶ Allow a little bit of the “American R”
- ▶ Allow the diphthongs to come through
- ▶ Diction is “placed” at the front of the mouth as in Musical Theatre singing

# Vocal Articulations Relative to Swing

WHY? Because we are performing a genre created instrumentally.

## ► HOW

- Vocalists must rely on diction and breath attack to accomplish any kind of accent.
- Energize beginning consonants to create rhythmic interest, especially in faster tunes
- Adding a breath pulse to lyrics beginning with a vowel will create an accent.

## ► WHEN

- As notated by the arranger
- On a scat syllable ending with a consonant (don't speak the consonant)
- Performing in Swing, add a slight tenuto on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of every group of 2 eighth notes
- Performing in Swing, internally subdivide quarter notes into 2 eighth notes (ghost note)

# Other Expectations

- ▶ **Accented Breath Release** - a rhythmic enhancement
  - ▶ Release the tone with an almost audible puff of air.
- ▶ Energize (intensify) into pitch changes.
- ▶ Energize (intensify) all notes longer than an eighth note.
- ▶ Adjust dynamic spectrum to maintain good vocal habits in louder moments.

# Resources - Publishers

- ▶ **Hal Leonard Music**  
<http://www.halleonard.com/index.jsp?subsiteid=5>  
Vocal Jazz Series, Discovery Jazz Series  
A vast amount of repertoire to choose from for all voicings and difficulty levels. Most of the more recent arrangements have audio samples.
- ▶ **Sound Music Publications (Edmonds, WA)**  
Frank DeMiero and Ken Krintz, co-founders  
<http://smpjazz.com/?action=welcome>  
Lots of excellent original charts as well as plenty of standards. Well defined difficulty rating system (levels 1-5.) Very few audio samples.
- ▶ **Alfred Music**  
<http://www.alfred.com/Browse/Ensembles/Choir-Secular.aspx>  
Pop Series features a Broadway/Movies category and a Great American Songbook category. Almost all of these arrangements have full audio samples.
- ▶ **UNC Jazz Press (Greeley, CO)**  
<https://www.uncjazzpress.com/>  
Excellent resource for a wide variety of vocal jazz for all voicings and difficulty levels. Many newer arrangements have audio samples.

# Resources – How-To Books

- ▶ *The Complete Guide to Teaching Vocal Jazz* (2002) by Steve Zegree  
ISBN-13: 978-0893281533
- ▶ *The Contemporary Chorus: A Director's Guide for the Jazz-Rock Choir* (1980)  
by Carl Strommen  
ISBN-13: 978-0882841113
- ▶ *Jazz Singing: Developing the Artistry and Authenticity* (2007) by Diana R. Spradling  
ISBN-13: 978-0980210408
- ▶ *Jazz Warm-Ups and Vocalises* (2011) by Gary Walth  
ISBN: 9781458405791 CD included
- ▶ *Swingle Singing* (1997) by Ward Swingle
- ▶ *The Vocal Jazz Ensemble* (2009) by Paris Rutherford  
ISBN-13: 978-1423455059 CD included
- ▶ *Vocal Jazz Style* (2nd ed.) (2010) by Kirby Shaw  
ISBN: 884088202903 CD available

# Resources - Books on Vocal Improvisation

- ▶ *Jazz Singers Handbook* (2005) by Michelle Weir  
ISBN-13: 978-0739033876 CD included
- ▶ *Scat! Vocal Improvisation Techniques* (1998) by Bob Stoloff  
ISBN-13: 978-0962846755 CD included
- ▶ *Vocal Improvisation* (2015) by Michelle Weir  
ISBN-13: 978-3892210627 CD included

# Resources - Listening

- ▶ The King's Singers <http://www.kingssingers.com/>
- ▶ The Swingle Singers <http://www.theswingles.co.uk/>
- ▶ Chanticleer <http://www.chanticleer.org/#about-chanticleer>
  
- ▶ Just 4 Kicks <http://www.singers.com/group/Just-4-Kicks/>
- ▶ LA Jazz Choir <http://www.stage3music.com/lajc/lajc.html>
- ▶ Manhattan Transfer <http://manhattantransfer.net/>
- ▶ New York Voices <http://newyorkvoices.com/>
- ▶ The Real Group <http://www.therealgroup.se/index.html>