



NATS Winter Newsletter December 2017

National Association of Teachers of Singing

Redwood Empire Chapter

President's Letter

Warm season's greetings to all!

I trust we all had a good Thanksgiving holiday, hopefully enjoying the love and warmth of family and/or friends, and that we could still find plenty to be thankful for in spite of the recent catastrophic fires that affected so many. Even though we drive by various reminders of that disaster nearly every day, I know we're all committed to rebuilding our lives and communities, and facing the future with courage and optimism.

Most of you will be glad to know that our chapter is also interested in moving ahead with our usual activities so that we can help re-create as much normalcy for ourselves and our students as possible. That being said, our next big event is the February 10, 2018 Singing Festival in Warren Auditorium at Sonoma State University. Those of you who attended the General Meeting last August know that a whole new format was excitedly adopted by everyone there.

For starters, there's the new name: Singing Festival. The emphasis will be much more on the joy of singing and gaining experience rather than on winning, although there will be a competitive element in the evening recital at the end of the day. The application forms and guidelines will be noticeably simplified, and the whole day just promises to be more streamlined and rewarding. Mary Beard has a more detailed description of the changes later in the newsletter so

please take the time to read through that and envision your students taking part in this exciting event!

Our next General Meeting will be Saturday January 13 at Susan Witt-butler's house, and we'll have much to discuss, as always, so please save the date and plan to come. Until then, here's wishing you a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Vaida Falconbridg

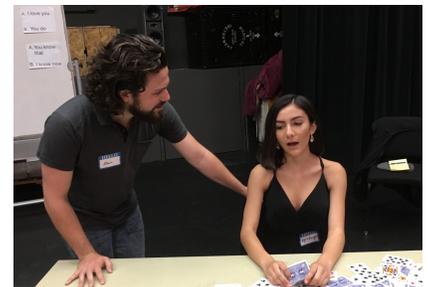


to characters in opera, art songs, and theater—gave a wonderful inspiring workshop for a large

Calendar 2018

Saturday January 13: Potluck and General Meeting,, noon-4 p.m. (meeting at 1 p.m.) Board meeting 10:30 a.m. At Susan Witt-Butler's home.

Saturday Feb. 10: Singing Festival 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and competitive Vocal Recital 5 p.m. Ives Hall, Sonoma State Univ.



turnout. It was in three sections. The first was group work, based on M. Chekhov's teachings on the embodiment of character, and about 20 of us were on the stage. We had a lot of fun physically acting out different points of view. The second section was based on the Meisner technique with short scenes, using just 4 lines which we all memorized. Five or six pairs went up to the stage one at a time, to work with the lines. The audience felt the thrill of the emotional and psychological point of view changing and deepening as the pairs worked. After a short intermission, 6 singers had an opportunity to sing a song and have Ms. Landes work with them and further their understanding of



General News

Workshop with Francine Landes

Francine Landes—who has vast experience in film, television and theater, as well as in teaching acting and bringing authenticity

the character singing their song. She used many of the techniques we had worked with earlier and we got to see them in action in a song as the singers really lived into the point of view they had chosen and brought emotional and psychological depth to the character singing. Although Ms. Landes was gentle and soft spoken, she evoked courage in the singers as they all took risks to go deeper than comfortable as they brought their characters more alive.

January General Meeting

Our next General Meeting is Saturday January 13, potluck at noon and meeting beginning at 1 p.m. at the home of Susan Wittbutler. Susan's neighborhood was greatly affected by the October fires but her home is finally cleared of all smoke damage, floors and carpets have been replaced, and they have been able to move back in. We will help bring new joy and light to Susan's home!

Since this is the meeting where we will discuss the logistic changes in the upcoming Singing Festival and competitive Voice Recital, we need your input! Please plan to attend!

Applications for the upcoming event are included with this newsletter. Please read them before giving them to your students since there are major changes of which everyone needs to be aware. It should be fun!

Upcoming Singing Festival and Voice Recital

This year we have decided to try something different in place of our traditional Scholarship Auditions. Many students would love to sing and even be evaluated but don't want the competitive environment

or aren't far enough along to be ready for a competition. So we will hold a **Singing Festival** on Saturday February 10 starting at 10 a.m.. It will be held in age Divisions as we did with the Scholarship Auditions, and there will be adjudicators to fill out evaluation sheets, but there will be no ranking and no winners at this point. Just a fun opportunity for singers at any stage of singing to perform and get evaluation to further their development. At the end of each Division the adjudicators may select one or two singers from that age Division to invite to sing in a competitive vocal recital at 5 p.m. The selected singers may opt to sing again or not, but if they do, these singers will receive "finalist" certificates and 3 of these finalists will be chosen to receive monetary prizes. So the festival itself will be for any of our students and a fun event. And there will still be the competitive option for those selected who wish to compete in the evening recital. We hope this will encourage teachers to enter more students in the festival than they normally would for a competition, and the students who are ready and want to compete are likely to get that chance as well in the "finalist" voice recital. We are looking forward to see how this format works and for the added flexibility it gives us. Please see the attached Application Forms for more specifics.