

Youth Traditional Song Weekend 2014

Workshop Descriptions

Staff Workshops

Big Singing

Suzannah Park

Singing with lots of folks is one of the most rewarding feelings out there. Come and sing traditional American and South African songs in three- and four-part harmony. All levels of singers are welcome and all songs will be taught by ear. We'll throw in some dance moves for extra fun. This will be a fast-paced but accessible and welcoming session for all levels of singers.

Creating and Singing Harmony

Suzannah Park

In this workshop we will play with creating harmonies and practice by doing. This is not a theory class. This is a jump in and find notes class and learn some tricks for finding your way and enjoying the journey. If you are attending the weekend with a singing partner or someone you hope to sing with more this would be a good session to get some extra coaching. It would also be good if you're flying solo but are looking for some more courage and sizzle in your harmony singing. It would be best if attendees can hold down a melody line with confidence and have some harmony singing experience.

Gospel Music, Black and White

Riki Schneyer

Someone once asked my old pal and singing partner, the late, great Jonathan Eberhart why he, as a nonbeliever, sang religious folk music. He replied, "Well, God got all the good songs." You need not be of a particular faith or belief system to enjoy the passion, fervor, and just

plain "singability" of these wonderful songs from both the Black and White American traditions. We'll talk some about these traditions, I'll sing a few, and then open the floor to anyone who wishes to sing a Gospel/sacred traditional song with a chorus. The main goal of this workshop: To trade songs and SING!

Out of the Archives and Into the Air

Bob Walser

Scratchy old cylinder recordings hold troves of wonderful song, but getting from the (now digitized) original to something you can actually sing can take a bit of work. Using examples from my own work (and I'll try to bring at some of the source field recordings I've used) I'll review my process and results then welcome your questions and critique!

The Purposeful Singer

Bob Walser

What kind of singer are you? What sorts of songs fit your personality, your vocal style and your passion(s)? In this workshop participants will explore how repertoire and performance reflect a singer's idea of 'The singer they want to be' and how to focus that energy to develop a more personal voice.

Respecting the Source

Riki Schneyer

When we sing the songs of traditions other than our own, a certain sensitivity is required. As contemporary folksingers, most of us are interpreters of traditional material, rather than members of the original cultures from which we learn our music. The treatment and respect we give these

songs is very important, and requires a certain amount of awareness about the function of the song in its own culture, as well as how to present the song in one's own, personal but authentic way. I'll sing some songs demonstrating some of these issues, and I hope those who wish to will bring a song to share. Among the subjects we'll consider: Accents and dialects—yes or no? Are there some songs it is just not appropriate for an outsider to sing? If it IS appropriate to sing a song, how do we assess where, when, and how? While I will talk about many cultures, I will focus particularly on the specifically American issue: White folk singing Black material. We'll sing, we'll talk, we'll think. But mostly sing, I hope!

Sing Me a Story & Tell Me A Song

Suzannah Park

Ballads are a wonderful way to connect to those who have gone before us and to folks here and now. We get to sing about stories big and small, tragic and whimsical. In this workshop we will each begin a musical journal and start to fill them with our own singing journey. We will learn a few of Suzannah's favorite ballads and talk about tradition and what role we each play as singers. Conversations about what role these story songs play in our lives and how to honor tradition and share ourselves when we sing. Attendees should bring one story song and a few pens or pencils to write/draw with.

The Song for The Moment

Bob Walser

Have you ever been in a singaround when someone chooses a song that's a complete dud and the energy just evaporates (or half the room decides it's time to use the bathroom)? Conversely, have you relished a moment when someone chooses a song and you are so glad they did—it's just right! Bring some fine songs to this workshop and from time to time we'll think together

about what makes a great contribution to a particular moment in the flow.

Unaccompanied Singing; Singing From The Heart

Riki Schneyer

Yes, Virginia, you can make beautiful music with your very own private, portable, cheap, versatile instrument: your voice. In this workshop, I'll demonstrate a variety of songs from my extensive repertoire of songs I sing unaccompanied, and I hope there are many of them you will join in on. We will discuss, among other things, what makes for effective unaccompanied singing: the importance of feeling the beat or "pulse" of the song, telling the story, "inhabiting," or feeling the song, harmony, texture, etc. We will consider the idea that any song can be sung unaccompanied if the singer can present it authentically, and we will discuss how to select songs that are appropriate for one's individual style/voice. Be ready to sing!

Participant Workshops

Around the World in 80 Songs

Chris Bracken

Geography nerds unite! We know lots of songs with place-names in them; ones that tell the story of journeys from here to there or celebrate one little corner of the globe. Bring your songs that mention out-of-the-way places (Cebu! Dhaka! Minsk!) or familiar spots (London Town! Old Virginny!) and we'll have a mellow session in which to sing them and stick pins in a map. Extra points if you can take off from the port where the previous person ended.

Bal Folk! French & Belgian Music & Dance

Gus Voorhees

I'll teach tunes for people with instruments and

dances for people without. Bourees, Scottishes, Mazurkas and more! I'm flexible in what we could do, I know that this is a vocal weekend so I wouldn't want to hold a purely instrumental workshop.

Georgian and Ukrainian Harmony

Brian Dolphin

We will learn to sing a few different Ukrainian and Georgian folk songs. We will focus on authentic vocal production, the specifics of the harmony that make this music sound so unique, and briefly talk about the music's cultural and ritual context.

Listening to Source Singers

Joanie Bronfman

Listening to recordings of some great English, Scottish, Irish and American source singers, many of whom I have met. We will also talk about the singers and the songs.

Shy Singers: It's Just A Song!

Heather Livingston

This is a place where it will be especially comfortable for shy singers to sing, because we are all shy singers in this workshop! (including me!) Song circle with songs we each feel really comfortable singing plus discussion of things that we worry about (will we remember the lyrics? will we start too high? sing off-key? And if so, will we know? Everyone's looking at me!) How to fix things midstream (and when it's better to just keep singing).

Song Accompaniment

Neal MacMillan

Discussion and demonstration of backing up a song without getting in it's way. Participants can show an accompaniment they have worked out or bring a song they want to accompany.

Songs That Organize People: Labor and Political Songs

Mike Livingston and Saro Lynch-Thomason

Learn and swap labor movement songs, and the stories behind them, from different times and places: the IWW Songbook, Appalachian coal mine wars, the Civil Rights movement, the original Luddites, the Dust Bowl/Depression, Seattle/WTO resistance, British songs about sustainability issues that hit island nations first, and the rich but obscure tradition of campaign songs in the United States.

Traditional Ballads

Lynn Feingold and Suzanne Mrozak

This is a singing workshop where you can listen to a variety of traditional ballads sung by experienced performers and also share your own performance of a traditional ballad. There will be some discussion of ballad versions, performing traditional ballads for a modern audience, and the stories behind the ballads.

Traditional Song and Modern Media

Tim Radford

When I started to learn songs I had to rely on listening to LP's or tapes, or stealing them from others that I secretly taped at song sessions or concerts. However, today there are a myriad of Online resources available via The Internet. These resources are not just printed media, but also Archival Recording of singers and musicians, some containing wonderful performances and songs not very well known to a general folk based audience. I would like to list some of these and if possible listen to one or two of these performances as an example. I will also provide lists of some of the resources available - as known by me, and ask others for more suggestions.