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Next page!

Textless  
Vocal Exercises

Music Humor

# The Chorus Newsletter

Published for and about the NOVA Community Chorus  
www.nvcc.edu/alexandria/visual/music and novachorus.org

## Schlesinger to Charge for NOVA Concerts

As some of you may know, the usage policy at the Schlesinger Center was changed last year. While in previous years we were able to use the Center at no charge, beginning last year we had to pay like other organizations. Last year's bill, totaling near \$18,000, was paid by the Alexandria Campus. This year the Campus has less money available, so we are in a precarious position.

I don't know how this situation will be resolved for the long-term, but for this year we will be asking our audience members for a donation of \$5 at the door at each of our concerts in order to help pay the Schlesinger bill. [This will not apply to ticketed events like WMPO concerts]. With this in mind, please keep the NOVA Community Chorus in mind for your end-of-the-year tax-deductible charitable giving.

Yours-DrW

### Newsletter On-Line!

If you didn't get a copy of the Newsletter when you arrived, please go to [novachorus.org](http://novachorus.org) where you can read it on line, thanks to Kate.

## The Conductor

*Ray Lipari has given us the following extracts from a reliable source about the role and function of a conductor. This is the first of a series of paragraphs on the subject\_\_ed.*

A conductor directs rehearsals and performances by an orchestra, band, chorus, opera company, or other musical group. In the most general terms, a conductor's job is to shape a musical interpretation to form ideas about the most compelling way to perform a piece and to lead a group of musicians in such a way that those ideas are realized. Conductors often serve as the "music director" of their organizations, as well. A music director's duties include choosing programs and soloists and hiring (and firing) musicians.

In shaping a musical interpretation a conductor has many specific responsibilities, which are similar no matter what kind of group he or she conducts. (In this discussion, an orchestra is assumed for the sake of convenience.) These responsibilities may be grouped as follows:

1. **Accuracy** — The conductor must ensure that the composer's intentions and instructions are faithfully carried out. At the very least, this means making sure that everybody's playing all the right notes and rhythms.

2. **Ensemble** — The conductor must make sure everyone plays together, in the precise rhythmic and musical coordination. The conductor is also responsible for giving "cues," signals with a hand motion, nod or look that indicates (or confirms) the right moment for an individual player or section to make a musical entrance.

To be continued excerpts from *The NPR Music Listener's Guide*, by Miles Hoffman, Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

# MUSIC HUMOR

## Textless Vocal Exercises

Q: How do you tell when your lead singer is at the door?

A: He can't find the key and doesn't know when to come in.

Q: Did you hear about the female opera singer who had quite a range at the lower end of the scale.

A: She was known as the deep C diva.

Q: What is the missing link between the bass and the ape?

A: The baritone.

Q: How can you tell when a tenor is really stupid?

A: When the other tenors notice.

Q: What's the inscription on dead blues-singers tombstones?

A: "I didn't wake up this morning..."

Person 1: It must be terrible for an opera singer to realize that he can never sing again.

Person 2: Yes, but it's worse if he doesn't realize it.

Q: Why do singers rock left and right while performing on stage?

A: They know that it is harder to hit a moving target.

Q: Mom, why do you always stand by the window when I practice for my singing lessons?

A: I don't want the neighbors to think I'm employing corporal punishment, dear.

Opera is when a guy gets stabbed in the back and, instead of bleeding, he sings.

Source: The Web

The chorus has been engaged in a few vocal exercises this semester; counting being but one of them. There are other vocal exercises that some of us may already be aware of, and even practiced as part of our voice training.

In the 17th century, the French used a vocal exercise that they called, "solfège." The Italians called it, "solfeccio."

This textless vocal exercise was, at first, rarely published. After it was adopted in France, the solfeggi were frequently published.

The term has also been used to mean the teaching of basic musical skills. Zoltan Kodaly developed a highly successful method intended for the teaching of children.

Currently, the syllables, do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si (ti) are applied to notes in two different ways, called fixed do, and movable do. In fixed do, the syllables are equivalent to the letter names, do = C, re = D, etc. In movable do, the syllables indicate the scale degrees of a major scale, In D major, do = D, re = E, mi = F# and so forth.

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Extracted from The New Harvard Dictionary of Music.



The Chorus Newsletter contains information about and for members of the NOVA Community Chorus. It is privately published monthly except during June and July. The College has no responsibility for its content. Members are encouraged to contribute articles and news about musical offerings and musical topics to Robert Trexler, editor and publisher, at [Retrex@aol.com](mailto:Retrex@aol.com)