



LEO SINGS! AALBORG

Teaching Teachers Of Rock / Pop / Jazz Choir
And Concert Aesthetics

From May 7th to 11th 2014





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INTRODUCTION

Leo Sings! is an international project focused in singing practices and choir conducting, where diversity of individual and collective vocal practices in Europe is addressed through the analysis of practices and the sharing of experiences in different parts of Europe. The aim of the project is to foster cooperation between actors, networks and people interested in vocal practice, as well as to analyze what diversity issues appear through the practice of singing. Through this project, European networks, voice professionals, singers, educators, trainers of choral conducting, and persons involved in choral practice or different fields can cooperate in regards to all the subjects involved in choral singing and its place in society, such as singing, teaching music, choral practice, coaching and development of practices, or production and diffusion. Therefore, some of the topics involved in this project, and always referring to choral and singing practice, are education, repertoire, relation between soloists and ensembles, curriculums, etc. Leo Sings! addresses vocal practice as an individual but also as a collective activity, taking into account the social significance and the differences regarding culture.

The project also aims to explore the structure of vocal practices in different European countries, in order to gain experience and to develop an improvement exercise for promoting dialogue about issues involved in voice and cooperation between artists. Furthermore, each partner will contribute with own experiences about vocal practice, training and modalities of singing in its specific country, and subsequently the project will identify issues for new ways of cooperating regarding singing education or vocal identities. The project partners' composition is diverse regarding origin, but always dedicated to choral practices and cultural cooperation. The partners of the project are:

- Plate-forme interrégionale d'échange et de coopération pour le développement culture (PFI) – France.
- European Voice Teachers Association (EVTA) – Germany.
- Centre de Pratiques Vocals et Instrumentales en Région Centre (Cepravo) - France
- European Voice Association (EVA) – Germany.
- Institut Européen de Chant Choral – Luxembourg.
- Moviment Coral Catalan (MCC) – Spain.
- Interarts – Spain.
- Royal Academy of Music Aarhus / Aalborg– Denmark.

The first event was developed from 5th to 7th February 2014 in Barcelona, where singing teaching and practice location (schools, universities) was the central theme. Each of the days focused in a different level in music and singing education: schools, music schools, university and professional level (see Minutes Barcelona).



The second event of the project took place in Aalborg (Denmark) and was organized by The Royal Academy of Aalborg. The main issues treated in this event dealt with the development and support of emerging aesthetics in singing practices in Europe, specially the stylistic approaches to pop, rock, jazz and improvised music. Moreover, the event in Aalborg dealt with training in choral conducting and choral practice, as well as conducting rhythmic music for choirs. All the workshops and seminars developed during the event were managed with collaborative and participative methods, in order to enhance active participation with the public.

PROGRAM

SESSION 2/5: AALBORG



Schedule	Room	
Wednesday May 7th		
18:00 - 19:45	Klassisk	Welcome session - moderators: <i>Jim Daus Hjemæ & Stéphane Grosclaude</i>
20:00	City	Welcome buffet: HUSET, Hasserisgade 10, 9000 Aalborg
21:00	City	Concert: (HUSET) Curtis Stiger Trio "Tri Fi" (US)
Thursday May 8th		
09:30 - 11:45	Klassisk	Methodology, The Intelligent Choir - moderator: <i>Jim Daus Hjemæ</i>
11:45 - 13:00	City	Lunch (of your choice)
13:00 - 15:15	Klassisk	Methodology, Vocal Jazz and rehearsal technique - moderator: <i>Jesper Holm</i>
15:15 - 15:45	SSB	Coffee break
15:45 - 18:00	Klassisk	Performance design - moderator: <i>Astrid Vang-Pedersen</i>
18:00 - 18:30	SSB	Snacks
18:30 - 19:15	Klassisk	Plenum
19:30 - 20:30	Intim	Concert : Mariagerfjord Girls Choir
Friday May 9th		
09:30 - 10:15	Klassisk	Long distance learning - moderator: <i>Jim Daus Hjemæ</i>
10:15 - 11:45	Klassisk	Methodology, Girls Choir - moderator: <i>Signe Sørensen</i>
11:45 - 13:00	City	Lunch (of your choice)
13:00 - 14:30	Rytmisk	Recording contemporary vocal music - moderator: <i>Henrik Birk</i>
14:45 - 16:30	Kla./Ryt.	Classes observation: Master & Diploma Moderators: <i>Jim Daus Hjemæ & Jesper Holm</i>
16:30 - 17:00	SSB	Coffee break ✓
17:00 - 18:45	Klassisk	Physical eartraining - moderator: <i>Jesper Falch</i>
19:00 - 19:30	Klassisk	Plenum
19:30 - 21:00	City	Dinner (of your choice)
21:00 - 23:00	Kla./Ryt.	Concert: Dopplers & VoxNorth
Saturday May 10th		
09:30 - 10:45	Klassisk	Vocal arranging - moderator: <i>Malene Rigrtrup</i>
10:45 - 11:15	Klassisk	Vocal percussion - moderator: <i>RoxorLoops</i>
11:15 - 12:00	Rytmisk	Vocal Effects, TC-Helicon - moderator: <i>Jes Vang, TC Electronics</i>
12:00 - 13:15	City	Lunch (of your choice)
13:15 - 14:30	Klassisk	Vocal technique Rock/Pop/Jazz - moderator: <i>Nina Lange</i>
14:30 - 15:00	SSB	Coffee break
15:00 - 16:45	Klassisk	Creativity and ideas development, The Organic Choir - moderator: <i>Peder Karlsson</i>
17:00 - 18:00	Rytmisk	Concert: Touché
18:00 - 18:30	SSB	Snacks
18:30 - 20:00	Klassisk	Plenum (wrap-up)
20:00	City	Dinner: Hotel Aalborg, Østerbro 27, 9000 Aalborg
Sunday May 11th		
09:00 - 11:00	Klassisk	Plenum (looking ahead)

THURSDAY MAY 8

9:30 - 11:45: The intelligent choir – Conducted by Jim Daus Hjernoë.

The first session consisted in an explanation of the methodology and the process used to teach rock, pop and jazz choirs as an “intelligent” choir. The “intelligent” choir is the ensemble that functions as an organic choir, or in other words, the opposite of an unprepared choir. A non-prepared choir is not trained, since it is prepared only to sing, and in consequence the unprepared choir is not coordinated, partly an outcome of not practicing at home. Both conductors and singers benefit from the above-mentioned methodology which includes a set of exercises.

For the “intelligent” choir music is divided in four headlines:

- Time & Groove.
- Intonation & Pitch.
- Interpretation & Expression.
- Blend & Sound.

After a few minutes of debate regarding these headlines, it was decided to change some terminological aspects, and leave the headlines as follows:

- Rhythm & Groove.
- Pitch & Intonation.
- Blend & Sound.
- Interpretation & Expression.

At this point of the workshop the term “groove” was discussed. According to some members of the audience, “groove” is a synonym of the word style; something that should be natural, and not forced, since if singers try too hard, the quality of the sound can be influenced and end up being spoiled (singers cannot perform as if they were trying to “win a contest”). Therefore, the presence of “groove” implies having a good swing. Furthermore, to develop a good swing it is necessary to start rehearsing at least two months in order to reach a specific level of “groove”. The “groove” is based on the division of beats, and all members of the choir need to feel and sing to the same exact *tempo*. In music “groove” contributes to the audibility of music, and also to transform the pulse in the music engine. In addition, “groove” enables the public to relax, since the music becomes more fluid and flexible. It was suggested to use the term *flow* instead of “groove”, which specifies more clearly the idea expressed during this part of the workshop.

“Groove”, therefore, has several important elements that influence music: constant *tempo*, the presence of beat divisions, and accents. The DNA of “groove” is the audible divisions, as well as the arrangements of the *tempo*. Moreover, the

importance of the physical ear training performed in the Academy of Aalborg was highlighted. The basic steps of this training are:

1) afro 2) gospel 3) half-time 4) back beat

1 and 1 and 3 and 4 and
downbeat backbeat downbeat backbeat

The concept of ghost notes is also very significant for music conducting and vocal practice. Ghost notes are the improvised notes and fills placed in the subdivisions of a song. The ghost notes enable the choir to move smoothly, and moreover the sign filter used in ghost notes helps improve the capabilities of shy singers or poor performers.

The Academy of Aalborg uses a technique to train singers that consists in leaving out the pitch (“energizer”) as a vocal exercise. With this technique, singers need to move physically with the sound of music, but without pitch (therefore internalizing the movement). The method for beginners includes physical movement with fingers action as well. At this point a discussion about the physical feeling when rehearsing music took place, stressing the importance of the subdivisions and the use of vocal percussion, besides the false perception of choirs only as classical ensembles. The signals, hand codes or hand gestures used by the teachers in the Academy of Aalborg are based in the theory known as “sound painting”, but with some modifications. The original signals can be checked in www.soundpainting.com.

The vocal percussion is used to train singers and help them to develop music language skills, as well as using music language. The Academy of Aalborg’s also uses improvisation to motivate singers, as a way to empower them with confidence and authority. Consequently, the methodology includes a session of improvisation every time students meet, to familiarize them with this technique and enable them to enough confidence to perform.

The workshop also included some practice regarding the techniques of conducting choirs in the Academy of Aalborg, with “groove”, and different types of intonation, as well as with the “energizer” technique and variation in pitch.

13:00 - 15:15: Vocal Jazz Workshop - Conducted by Jesper Holm.

The vocal jazz workshop consisted of an explanation on how to train choirs specialized in jazz. Classes for jazz choirs in the Academy of Aalborg are performed with music sheets and also with original music. The foreseen outcome using this method is the capacity for the singer to interpret a good song, to see and analyze the music and, consequently, to achieve a positive result regarding interpretation. The workshop was divided in different sections to cover multiple issues regarding

conducting jazz choirs: vocal jazz, methodology in general (work based on sheet music), known pieces, new pieces, and conducting choirs.

There are different techniques to conduct jazz choirs and diverse factors influence the outcome. Among these are the swing feeling, with groove and jazz phrasing, the sound and blend of voices –breathy tone, no vibrato, instrument imitation, microphones-, and harmonic complexity, specifically about how to deal with this complication. Moreover, and according to Jesper Holm and the Academy of Aalborg methodology, the key to teach jazz choirs lies in listening to great artists and interpreting classics. Some issues about rehearsal techniques were pointed out as advices for jazz choir conductors, for instance the form of presentation, sing melodies, pre-exercises with rhythm and harmony, exercises with energize / speaking-choir / text / call response / Simon says /imitation / experimentation, etc. Other rehearsal methods were also explained as follows, always in accordance with the order:

- Flow: Whole, Detail, Whole, Success.
- Focus: One topic at a time:
 - o Rhythm: RhytPreex, Energize, steps, clap, metronome, flowting tempo.
 - o Intonation: HarmPreex, Theory understanding, 1-2-3, StopOnChords, Flowting Pitch.
 - o Sound and blend: Foor roof, singing technique, shadowing, listening/changing.
 - o Interpretation: Story, Phrasing, Conducting, Listening / Changing, Staging.

The key to achieve a good performance and a good level as a jazz choir is attacking at the same time, or in other words, starting to sing at the very exact time, doing it with the exact same tone color (timbre), and finally releasing also at the exact same time (1-2-3 technique). Furthermore the harmonic understanding is also important to achieve a good level of vocal performance.

The workshop included harmonic practical challenges. These practical exercises included the use of numbers to recognize the harmonies, a method used in the Academy to train singers to determine the position of the tone in the songs. Basic harmony exercises are useful as is the progression in the jazz songs (4-5-6). Finally, it is necessary to rehearse how to start and to release at the same time. Some examples showed in jazz phrasing of vocal big bands were “Shiny stocking”, “Basie”, “Ella” and “Milt Jackson”.

The importance of body language in conducting was also pointed out; indeed, gestures made by the conductor underline the music and singers wait for specific signs to perform a sound or note. A jazz choir needs to swing as big band, using jazz phrasing, accents (for instance: vi va vu va), and learning to do it on or behind

the beat. The methodology also uses jazz phrasing with a saxophone style as a vocal exercise. Examples of this kind of exercises include hitting the note at a specific time to give a certain delay, under pronouncing the lyrics, or using shadowing (voices copying the lead voice's style and phrasing). Lastly, harmonic pre-exercises were performed: listening to the beat, and practicing the lowest and the highest pitch, and choosing one leader in the group to start and lead the phrasing (exercises with known pieces are performed with and without a conductor).

The Academy of Aalborg performs rehearsals without microphones, unlike other European centers where rehearsals are carried out with monitors. Nevertheless, the Academy uses monitors in concerts and live performances.

15:45 - 18:00: Performance Design – Conducted by Astrid Vang-Pederson

The performance design workshop revolved around the new aesthetics in performance design for choirs. According to Astrid Vang-Pederson, a fixed tension exists in performance design in concert halls. Music acts as the main communicator with the audience but a balance must be accomplished regarding music and aesthetics (aesthetics also play a key role in the results of a concert). Therefore, choir's members and singers must be educated in aesthetics, and the conductor needs to pay attention to aesthetical issues.

Nowadays concert halls are built taking into account acoustics and architecture concepts but, unfortunately, sometimes the relationship between the audience and the performers is forgotten. Therefore, the mood of the audience is always a question mark in the aesthetical structure: new ways to address the relationship between performers and audiences are developed in order to provide for more meaningful live performances. In addition, the overall experience needs to be tackled developing new ways of organizing the relationship between performers and audiences through surprise, interaction, ensemble identity, and narrative, as well as gathering and dispersing.

The concert designer may be the conductor, the producer, the director, etc. The importance of flow during a concert was pinpointed, and furthermore the capacity of conductors of experimenting with the re-design of the concert aesthetics. Therefore, the performance design model is based on concert aesthetics. Furthermore, interactive exercises on standing and balance were carried out during the workshop. The exercises for singers and conductors included:

- Individual and group performance training (continuously)
- Staging on songs and sets (specifically)
- Set list and narratives (context related)

The actors and ingredients of concert aesthetics are the music, the audience, the concert hall and the performer. On the other hand, the basic dynamics of concert aesthetics involve the gathering of the public when they arrive to the venue, the narrative of the concert (actually the performance), and the dispersing when the concert finishes. Methods need to be applied to control and impulse the dispersing of the public, since the interaction among public before and after the concert is an often underestimated factor of successful performances. In conclusion, the feelings and concepts embroiled in performance design may include sensitivity, surprise, inclusion or identity.

18:15 - 18:45: Plenum

Ineke Van Doorn intervened to explain some of the issues about teaching pop and jazz singing in The Netherlands. Ineke Van Doorn is a professional vocal singer, and she also teaches and designs training programs. She presented the P&J Singing Education 1988 Conservatory program, a 5 year course which includes both theory and ensemble lessons. Interpretation, improvisation and singing techniques are still being taught in separate classes in The Netherlands. Singing techniques are mostly taught by classical trained singing teachers, and interpretation lessons are given by autodidact performers. Nevertheless, some schools offer vocal improvisation lessons. The Dutch government stopped funding music schools, and teaching in music schools does not balance technique and interpretation.

The question of what makes a good pop jazz singer was raised. The combination of professionalism (skills and knowledge) and individuality (finding your own voice) is fundamental. The Dutch situation until the end of the 90s was based on methods from theatre, speech techniques, cognitive methods, Lichtenberg methods, core singing, etc.

The discussion in this session revolved around the trends in teaching and conducting pop and jazz choirs. Pop and jazz students switch teachers more often than other students, and only a few students go on to a master's after finishing their bachelor degree or diploma. There are no learning opportunities for singing teachers, and sometimes employers deny teachers a job because of licenses, even though they are highly trained. Another topic of discussion was the trademarks in commercial courses.

Regarding singing technique, the vocal possibilities were mentioned, as well as the importance of the repertoire and the results when a singer wants to express feelings in a performance.

A meeting with some master and diploma students of the Academy of Aalborg was scheduled for after the plenum. The students performed a small introductory presentation before a Q&A session.

The day ended with a feedback session: the presentations were highly valued as was the link between the workshop (for instance on jazz improvisation) and the information provided during the day. Also, participants valued the connection between singing and practice, expressed by the audience as a good combination of funny and serious lectures. The situation of different countries regarding vocal and choir practices was compared with that in The Netherlands, for instance with Sweden, which is less advanced, and with France, where there is no incorporation of methodology for education in music conducting.

19:30 – 20:30: Concert

Mariagerfjord Girls' Choir performance with modern music repertoire which included a choral version of contemporary music.

FRIDAY 9 MAY

9.30 - 10:15: Long Distance Learning – Conducted by Jim Haus

The Academy of Aalborg has long-distance learning methods to help students that live abroad or in other parts of the country. In this workshop the method applied was explained and an example of the program was presented. With this method the students receive feedback online, and all the meetings are recorded. Besides the long distance meetings are used to perform exercises on intonation, to play the piano or other instruments, sing phrases; chat or special tools to paint and upload pdfs are used. The Academy bought this program, which is pretty expensive, a few years ago with funding from the Danish government.

The long-distance learning method enables students to watch videos of their own performances, and this is considered more convenient for students who do not live in Aalborg. One of the problems of long distance learning is the small delay generated during the conversations or exercises, which can confuse the students when hearing the singing or phrasing. The meetings are scheduled within an hour, and the time spent with each student is taken into account in order to have enough time for all students enrolled in the diploma or the master's degree. The experience of the Academy shows that students using this method sometimes make more efforts and that teachers only have to make suggestions or give advice. It was decided that in the next event (Tours, France) a live chat with students will take place in order to show a real class using the long distance learning. "Team viewer" was suggested as an alternative to this program, especially because of its high price.

10.15 - 11.45 Girls' Choir – Conducted by Signe Sorensen

Signe Sorensen is the conductor of the *Mariagerfjord Girls' Choir*, composed of girls aged 11 to 17. She started conducting girls' choirs to give girls, living in a community of farmers mostly, an opportunity to practice something other than... football in their leisure time!

The differences in groove in classical and contemporary music were stressed. In this kind of choir teaching, it is important to make the children comfortable with music. In classical music the communication is only one way, but in contemporary music the girls must feel that everyone is listened to and taken account of.

Working with girls can be complicated and discipline has to be applied. If a bad mood is perceived, the teacher must act to avoid bigger problems. Success is never only for the choir's leader, since teamwork is a key element to perform in girl choirs, or in other words, the success must be for everyone involved in the choir. The girls must perceive that they are talked to as equals but with the notion of having a leader, and furthermore fun must be always present in the rehearsals in order to motivate the girls.

The girls of the *Mariagerfjord* choir practice singing, phrasing, blend, but also teamwork, status and body language. Therefore personal and technical issues are dealt with during classes. The children must overcome boundaries and insecurities and also be made to relax; games are played or interactive and entertaining activities are organized.

The “practice makes perfect” theory was mentioned, underlining the importance of practicing several times a week. In order to feel motivated to perform, girls have to be put on stage; and, the more they practice the better they will get: the girls practice at home and improve their voice performance at rehearsals.

The development of girl choirs' teaching in the Academy is focused on the process, and not exclusively on the results. Indeed, the contribution that music makes towards the development of young people is very significant, with emotional and physical impacts and results. The Academy of Aalborg provides a complete program since early childhood, giving priority to the girls' future and ambitions.

13:00 - 14:30: Recording contemporary vocal music – Conducted by Henrik Birk

The workshop, conducted by Henrik Birk, focused on how to record choir music successfully. Questions about cue tracking or guiding tracks were raised: is it necessary, does it kill music, when should it be used, and how should it sound. The advice from Henrik Birk was to practice with programs such as Pro Tools, with options as Undo or Redo. Additionally, cue tracks can be used in recording to make the singer follow the music. Before a recording, rehearsing in a separate room is very important. There is also an option of recording in different rooms, or recording the band before the choir.

The set-ups for recording choirs are multiple: traditional “tutti” choirs, modern / contemporary productions, dub methods, or combining set-ups. The 3-1 rule is something to take into account to record choirs; the distance between the microphones must be at least three times the distance of the microphone from the

singer that it gets the sound from. Too many microphones can represent a problem in recording. Moreover, the dub method can be used and it consists in isolating each element in the song.

For basic recording, choir members must be open minded; if everything goes how expected, but finally the sound from the speakers is not very satisfying, the members must be open minded and be able to change elements in the songs. It is also possible to divide the song into parts or sections, and glue it all afterwards in the studio. In the case of recording with not experts, it is recommended to keep the voices of the rest of the band out (or shadow singing); each singer hearing only his own voice and the cue track, to keep them on track during the song. Producers must transmit good energy in the studio, especially when working with children choirs.

In dub recording, shadows are glued generally afterwards. When vocalizing, the recording's order does not really matter. It was advised not showing the pre-mixed songs to the choir, because it can be bad for moral since the pre-mixed has generally a poor sound quality.

Remarks were made regarding the editing process as well. The difficulty of selecting the best recordings and selection takes was pointed out, and the possible tools regarding pitching (pitch correction) as auto tunes (automatic, graphical). Moreover, the overall pitching, or raising a falling pitch, is a task involved in some recordings. Pitching is therefore a matter of good taste. It must be taken into account that there is a risk of having a flat sound if the songs are much pitched (i.e. correct only in certain and necessary spots).

The timing of a song needs to be corrected only if necessary. The automatic timing is not as bad as auto tune; however the manual timing is a very hard work and time consuming. The mixing process must have different elements: a vision (the story to be told); a look to role models to have references; basic sound and equalization (group faders); creation of spaces for all elements of the song; and finally the dynamic lines.

The mastering process involves a last sound check in different speakers (in a good master studio), a relative volume between the songs, doing good gaps (transitions), formalities, choosing the proper professional for doing the master, and paying attention to the loudness (it is not recommended to pump up the volume with compressors, since it can cause bad results in choirs or other types of music).

More information about technical issues can be found in www.coronamusic.dk

17.00 - 18.45: Physical Ear Training – Conducted by Jesper Falch

Collaborative and interactive exercises about rhythm were performed during the entire session.

19:00 – 19:30: Plenum

In the opinion of the audience, it was an intense day, and the workshops were useful for teachers who work primarily with children. Recording workshops were hard for some people; however other people would like to go further into the topic (the idea of dividing the group in beginners and experts was discussed). In addition, it was stressed that it is important to understand that the performance stage is the central and most important issue, and that is why the question of performance was underlined during the whole day. Also, the issue of long distance learning was surprising to some members of the audience, since it represents a good communication tool for teachers and students.

The networks and the pedagogical aspect of the workshops were accentuated, as well as the sharing of experiences about teaching to children. Discussions regarding the online platforms proceed, where interactions between students take place. The new way of teaching developed in the Academy of Aalborg was seen as a difficult matter by some people, as the need of giving guidelines to students for using the online platform.

Finally, a presentation of the project Hallo Stimme! took place. This Austrian project consists in connecting people with their own voices, through seminars for people who feel the need to sing. Therefore the participants are trained to use their voices properly and in a professional way. The project includes an event in Salzburg every two years, and proper training is provided to people who want to participate in a choir. They use humor to improve people's voices, and the results have shown that participants get happier, stronger, more decisive, healthier, etc.

21:00 – 23:00: Concert

Performance of *Dopplers & VoxNorth*.

SATURDAY 10 MAY

9:30 – 10:45: Vocal Arranging – Conducted by Marlene Rigtrup

Marlene Rigtrup is a teacher in vocal arrangement in the Academy of Aalborg, and she talked about how a vocal arrangement can be added to an already created song. The objective was to give the public new ideas about vocal arrangement. According to Marlene Rigtrup, the concept of arranger can be equivalent to composer, and therefore an arranger can create a vocal idea, an independent vocal expression, a voice as the starting point, or a re-arrangement (to do a vocal version of an existing song).

The example of the song Viva la Vida by Coldplay was used, since it has been arranged by Jens Johansen in the form of a vocal version, and played by the *Mariagerfjord Girls Choir*.

Moreover, an exercise about arrangement was proposed. This exercise (re-arr) consists in finding the most used song one can think of, and to take a vocal arrangement with personal modifications. Additionally, more exercises of vocal arrangement were performed, with examples of musicians like Tori Amos, who uses tensions in her music and by which she clearly shows her classical music background.

10:45 – 11:15: Vocal Percussion – Conducted by RoxorLoops

This workshop involved vocal percussion training and demonstrations from RoxorLoops, a professional beat-boxer.

11:15 - 12:00: Methodology for singers – Conducted by Jes Vang

The workshop introduced a line of products of the company TC Electronics, and how the application of certain products can help singers to improve their vocal skills. Since vocal processing and singer electronic tools are supposed to foster creativity, music creation and improvisation with the voice can benefit from using technology and new advances for processing the voice or building a song using loops. Therefore, the vocal processing tool exhibited by TC Electronics gives singers the possibility of improvising more confidently. Most of the singers use these kinds of devices for delay, and also pitch correction comes automatically. According to Jes Vang, the outcome of using this product is happier and more confident singers.

A demonstration of the capacity of the product followed in the last part of the workshop. This demonstration proved that the singer capabilities improve, with the pitch correction and the use of the full voice including all muscular capabilities.

13:15 - 14:30: Vocal technique rock / pop / jazz – Conducted by Nina Lange

Nina Lange showed how research in computer science proves that each human voice is different from another and to what point it is a unique instrument. Methods to replace voices or change voice tones were shown, seeing that the tone of a voice opens and closes. Also a demonstration about the operation of larynx and vocal cords took place, and an explanation on how the muscles work when singing (a series of videos with a camera showing the larynx and the vocal chords, and how they move when singing different tones). Moreover, she compared different larynxes and palatals with images, and also how the muscles that allow to swallow produce different sounds (falsetto, full voice, etc.). Several issues were discussed with teachers and students, applying anatomy to enhance voices.

The parts of the body suitable to have a repercussion in the voice (as they can be moved and controlled) are the larynx, pharynx, jaw, tongue, lips and soft palate. The combination of movements of those parts impact the voice's distinction or range of tones. Therefore the voice's characteristics can be neutral, twang/nasal,

twang/oral, cry, curbing, overdrive, headvoice, falsetto, belting, and opera, as well as mixed. The positions of the vocal cords, larynx position, support / anchoring, soft palate, “twanger”, pharynx width and tongue are crucial to reach and produce certain type of voice.

15:00 - 16:45: Creativity and ideas development, the organic choir – Conducted by Peder Karlsson

Peder Karlsson started the workshop stating that humans have a natural metronome, and the practice in *tempo* makes vocal practice organic. Choirs require collaborative work, in opposition to the lonely artist (example of the architect Antoni Gaudí and his famous phrase “my client is not in a rush” when questioned about the slow progress of the church La Sagrada Familia).

The concept of organic choirs is open to interpretation. Therefore, it could be a natural organization, including collaborative and creativity processes, rotated leadership, group identity and musical expressions based on members’ voices, relationship focused communication, or new music developed without microphones. Besides, the organic choir could be all about fun, focus and feeling, only focusing on preparation and improvisation, as well as embodied singing. Lastly the organic choir can refer to the gift economy that challenges the money economy, with no branding and collective ownerships of ideas. Making a choir organic is the best way to train choirs (like nature); since hierarchy is a military concept based on dominance. The dream scenario for organic choirs would be having integration classes in local community activities, but also for children (from 3 onwards) who can become experts on rhythm, as well as in junior high schools and high schools.

Peder Karlsson was a member of *The Real Group* vocal band, and the works and achievements of the band were highlighted. The Real Group was a 5 member band, set up in 1984 at the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm. The band took a post-graduate diploma exam in 1989 (equivalent to a soloist’s master’s degree) and since then performed as a full-time professional group. Until Peder Karlsson quit the group (2010) they released 16 CDs and performed over 2000 times in more than 50 countries.

Peder Karlsson explained how his professional career evolved after quitting The Real Group: he went on to become the director of Perpetuum Jazzile, a Slovenian musical group that performs bossa nova, swing, funk, gospel and pop using characteristics of close harmony music. The group formed in 1983 in Ljubljana by Marko Tiran, and performs more than 70 concerts per year, with more or less 50 members. Between 2001 and 2011 Tomaz Kozlevcar was the musical director of the group, and then Peder Karlsson took over (from February 2001 until February 2014). The group uses a typical concert scenario, and became famous through the video “Africa” which has been viewed by over 16 million spectators. After Peder

Karlsson's departure as the musical director (he still acts as an advisor/mentor), the group has a musical leadership teamwork of four leaders and one coordinator.

In a vocal group creativity must be focused in doing something not based on the result (the result is unexpected). According to Peder Karlsson creativity can be foster through workshops where 2-6 persons sit at a table with a "table master" present and in charge. Two papers are put at each table with a topic about rehearsals, concerts, new repertoire, recordings, group culture (social issues), etc. The allowed responses to ideas are *Yes* and *Maybe*. The cycle closes with going back to the table that applies to a particular idea. These creative cycles go from idea to gift (Evaluation, feedback, improvement), and include an identity check (me, group, world).

The different rooms for creativity explained in the workshop are:

- Room 1: *idea*: here and now, inspiration, feeling, emotion.
- Room 2: *choice*, solution: development over time.
- Room 3: *new form*: room 1 + room 2 = product, gift
- Room 4: *meet the public*

The workshop continued with an explanation of a master's project that Merel Martens (current student at The Royal Academy of Music) is carrying out with the assistance of Peder Karlsson, titled "Merel's Organic Choir. The workshop was open for suggestions and observations by the public, as an opportunity to share knowledge and exchange opinions with a professional group of conductors. The master's thesis focuses in creating a new music group (*a cappella*) and the expected date of conclusion is April 2015. The main characteristics of this new vision of a music group are process-oriented arranging, openness to change after the songwriter provides the basic material and the introduction to a starting point to the group where a collective work starts. This collective work represent a pre-created framework (for example harmonies or riffs) where the music is developed without microphones (microphones can be used once the music has been finished). The style and sound of the group can be defined as a free style ("blue word") where there are open borders between what is arranged and what is improvised. Vocal techniques are combined (harmonic structures from different styles and genres) and expressions and sounds natural to humans are used, regardless of which part of the anatomy produces the sound. The group does not use literal translations from instruments to vocal sounds.

The new music group conceived by Merel Martens does not exclude members in relation to age or experience, therefore various backgrounds are welcome. Classical and rhythmical singers and instrumentalists are combined in the group, both professional and amateurs. During the auditions the singers' capacity to improvise and to "shadow" is checked. Furthermore, in the performances the audience participates, and songs are developed including lines created by the

audience. Another important issue regarding audience participation is the convenience of including audience improvisation, and using the public to build a framework for the improvisation of the artist group.

The leadership structure of the new musical group focuses in “shadowing”, and therefore in leadership rotation. During the improvisations multiple people make choices, not only following the conductor, who also sings in the performances. Finally, rotating the leadership transcends group boundaries, at least temporarily.

17:00 - 18:00: Concert - Touché

Performance of the band Touché.

18:30 - 20:30: World Cafe

The world café consisted in presenting a set of ideas in four different tables. Each table included a topic discussed during the three days of the event, and the participants expressed their ideas related to the topics. The four topics were 1) new aesthetics, 2) how to improve musical education, 3) help choral conducting, and 4) how to work with modern technologies. The objective of this activity is to find out the reaction of participants, and to wrap up the issues of the event including all opinions from the audience. The principal ideas and thoughts produced in each table are indicated below:

Table 1: New aesthetics

- Amplification.
- Rhythm and groove.
- Quality of arrangements.
- New aesthetics.
- New set of rules on stage.
- Improvisation: dynamic for some, difficult for public sometimes.
- Difficulty of achieving success with new aesthetics.
- Create the Academy of Aalborg’s pedagogy structure in other countries.

Table 2: How to improve musical education?

- Education levels in music.
- Pitching improvement.
- Interaction between teachers.
- Relation with professional musicians.
- Train choral directors to teach voices that need to change.
- Lobby for more funding for music teaching.
- Prejudice for classical choirs.
- Connection in people: make it more noticeable to politicians.
- Mixing repertoire.
- Input and opinions from students.

Table 3: Help choral conducting

- Confidence.
- Continuous learning.
- More confidence in students.
- Bridges between classical and modern choirs.
- More motivation and more structure to pieces.
- Illustrations and examples through concerts during the event.
- Teachers in different countries.
- How to take Academy's tools and apply them to different countries.
- Sharing artistic exchange between conductor and group / position of conductor.
- Fun in conducting choirs.
- Organic choirs.
- Importance of process compared to results.
- Convenience of short bits of rehearsals during workshops.
- Safe environment during the event.
- Social component and feeling in choir members.

Table 4: How to work with modern technologies

- Keep authenticity.
- Difference in cultures.
- New pedagogical aspect regarding technology.
- Self-teaching.
- Software.
- Security and IT issues
- Databases.
- Availability of a list of tools to use.
- Basic education in technology for teachers and students.

After the "World Café" and the presentation of the results in each table, the next event of Tours was displayed, including the preliminary list of activities and the provisional program. This event will focus on the management of collective vocal practices and diversity in vocal practices. Several French national organizations will join the event to share experiences on management, choral conducting, trainings and repertoires, and it will include various showcases and master classes.

Afterwards, the "Le loup blanc" film crew - responsible for the production of the documentary of the event - presented their company and also the teaser capturing the atmosphere and ambience. Short bits of all workshops and concerts will be displayed in a total time of approximately 5 minutes.

Interarts' representative (Julio Martínez) intervened to summarize the results of the event regarding the objectives and opportunities of cooperation. The good

organization was highlighted, as well as the interaction between the audience and the speakers. The mixture between theoretical and practical contents was a good opportunity for building relationships and sharing knowledge from different networks in European countries. During the “world cafe” and round tables most of the participants intervened and more experiences and opinions were shared, therefore the diversity of vocal practices was demonstrated. In this way, the best opportunities to share issues regarding choral conducting and singing need to be boosted through this kind of cooperation initiatives.

CONCLUSION

The general impression of the event was positive regarding the organization and the results in the participants’ opinion. Both the project coordinator (PFI) and the organizer of the event (Academy of Aalborg) showed their satisfaction with the development of the sessions. The event grouped a range of professional and amateurs with different backgrounds as well as specialists in different fields, a fundamental element to fulfil the project’s objective of building new opportunities for cooperation and bridges for exchange of experiences. The dialogue between the project partners and the audience was intended to be fluid, and knowledge from all members of the audience was shared to improve the topics under discussion as well as common expertise and know-how. The expected results of the project are a better knowledge by the partners of vocal practice in other European regions and countries, as well as the development of new contacts and opportunities for exchange and cooperation. Overall, it can be considered that the objective of sharing knowledge and experiences has been achieved, and also that new contacts have been indeed generated.

The fact that the Academy of Aalborg shared its teaching methods and a general vision of its philosophy towards vocal practices allowed the public to gain knowledge on choir conducting and differences in teaching depending on the origin and modalities of practices. In addition, an analysis of Danish career options, employability and education at university level was carried out. All topics and objectives of the project were addressed, guaranteeing the project’s further development and planning of the next phases. Actors and networks from different countries and fields of action participated and shared information and expertise, especially from practices in Denmark.

Practical experiences such as “energizer” or the beat-boxing workshop illustrated the advantage of carrying out these experiences, mainly because the audience participated and therefore the atmosphere in the sessions improved; also opportunities for cooperation increased since participants were more willing to engage in the conversation and in communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The final objective of the project is centered on the diversity of singing practices. However, the event in Aalborg focused mostly on technical issues relating to the training of pop, jazz and rock choirs, with no focal point on diversity and tradition, and only showcasing vocal practice and teaching in the Academy of Aalborg (with some exceptions as the vocal education in the Netherlands). Therefore it is recommended to insist in the situation of different countries (a possible way would be by creating specific workshops containing interaction between jazz and pop choirs active in different countries) and the impact in other sectors such as social, cultural and political. The diversity of choir teaching techniques and vocal practices throughout Europe needs further analysis and consideration regarding intercultural processes. In order to enhance intercultural relations vocal practices must be shared to start a process of common knowledge and understanding. Also, diversity can be fostered through synergies with other sectors, fields and civil actors. The main opportunity in the project is to enrich the voice practices in other countries by sharing experiences, therefore additional cooperation needs to be implemented, enhancing opportunities through exchange programs for artists, specific projects and co-productions.

The institutional level was not explained enough (although each of the events of Leo Sings! is located in a different country), or in other words, the influence of the State in the decisions of diversity and support to singing practices. It would be important to compare the situation of government support in all the European countries. Vocal and choir practices are sometimes bottom-up processes with no support from the government. It is recommended addressing this situation by gathering data of the importance of this kind of “unofficial” structures to raise awareness, ask for more support and subsidies, and propose policy developments. Knowledge of diverse country circumstances would help to address the question properly.

Another suggestion is to collect more information on vocal health and intercultural issues, since the audience is very diverse. If each member of the audience (amateurs and professionals) gives information about the education system within their country, and also the characteristics of each national singing practice, an enrichment process would start, which could benefit other singing practices. Therefore all participants need to share more knowledge, and abandon, in occasions, their passive role. On the other hand, the relation between modern and classical choir conducting and vocal practices is interesting and it would be convenient to explain it in more detail (differences, stereotypes, opportunities of improvement, etc.).

Furthermore, the accessibility and barriers to singing practices or education needs further scrutiny. Internal barriers such as location of the studies were analyzed during the event through the long distance learning program, however the

integration of new members and the situation of non-official training could increase the possibilities of providing a complete overview of the vocal practice in a given country. Furthermore, the training and background of teachers and qualifications for training a choir must be explained since it can result in problems regarding minimum required teaching levels, as well as the recognition of diplomas, degrees and master's. Accordingly the professional development of choir members and teachers can be enhanced by the recognition of qualifications throughout Europe.

In addition, teaching and being a member of a choir has social repercussions, as any kind of activity developed professionally or for leisure. The sense of community and belonging is a crucial part of choirs. This topic was only touched upon briefly during the presentation of the *Mariagerfjord Girls' Choir*. It is recommended to address this issue in the next events, especially the consequences (positive or negative) of being a choir member, regardless of the age and social conditions, and the contribution that choral practice makes to social cohesion processes. The workshops attempted to explain the situation and teaching methods in the Academy of Aalborg, nevertheless the situation regarding music education in the whole country demands supplementary data and explanation, as well as the importance of the music subject in elementary and secondary school education.

Finally, at some point of the workshops descriptions of musical theory or general issues were presented in a way either too advanced or too simple, since the audience was formed by both professionals and amateurs. A balance of content in the sessions must be obtained because of the different kinds of education backgrounds, in order to reach and spread knowledge to everyone involved in the sessions. It is recommended to keep the teaching level at an intermediate level, or otherwise make an analysis of the public's background to adapt the topics and contents.