

# VOICE PEDAGOGY FOR TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY SINGERS DAY ONE: THE CHORAL EXPERIENCE

Saturday, March 20

Hosted by the Cascade NATS Chapter

Register here: <http://natscascade.org/pedagogy-2021/>

All sessions will be recorded. Session recordings and materials will be available to registered participants for 2 months after the webinar.

All times listed are Pacific Standard Time.



William Sauerland  
(he/him/they/them/theirs)



Ash (Amir Shirazi)  
(they/them/theirs)



Sebastien Eichvalds  
Rodriguez (they/them/theirs)



Jordan Sanderson  
(he/him/his)

TIME	ACTIVITY
9:00 – 9:30 AM	<b>Introductions</b> 1. Establishing Community Norms 2. Identifying Ourselves
9:30 – 10:00 AM	<b>Gender Expansive Language</b> Attendees will discuss vocabulary and language syntax that is necessary for welcoming and affirming gender expansive singers.
10:00 – 10:40 AM	<b>Towards Reflective Teaching</b> The <i>undoing</i> of harmful and transphobic practices in music is as essential to the <i>doing</i> of strategies to affirm gender expansive singers.
10:40 – 11:00 AM	<b>Break</b>
11:00 – 11:45 AM	<b>Strategies for Affirming Gender Diversity</b> Practices and policies for affirming all students in the vocal ensemble will be discussed.
11:45 – 12:00 PM	<b>Music Activity: Justice Choir Songbook</b> Attendees will learn “Courage to Be Who We Are” by Ruth Huber
12:00 – 1:30 PM	<b>Lunch</b>
1:30 – 2:00 PM	<b>Policy Statements for Music Teaching with guest Jordan Sanderson (he/him/his)</b> The what, when, why and how to have a written policy statement for your choir or applied studio.
2:00 – 2:45 PM	<b>Scenarios for Music Teachers</b> Music teachers encounter a wide variety of social, emotional, and musical encounters in their career. In small groups, participants will discuss how to best handle different scenarios as a teacher.
2:45 – 3:00 PM	<b>Break</b>
3:00 – 3:45 PM	<b>Q&amp;A with the Transpose PDX Leadership Team</b> Leaders of the Portland’s transgender and non-binary choirs Transpose PDX will discuss the mission, vision, and pedagogy of the organization through an open question and answer session.
3:45 – 4:30 PM	<b>Choral “Reading” Session &amp; Closing Remarks</b> Attendees will read choral pieces by Mari É Isabel Valverde, Michael Bussewitz-Quarm, and other trans and gender expansive composers.

# VOICE PEDAGOGY FOR TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY SINGERS DAY TWO: APPLIED VOICE PEDAGOGY

Sunday, March 21

Hosted by the Cascade NATS Chapter

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Liz Jackson Hearn  
(she/her/they/them)



Alexandra Plattos Sulack  
(she/her)



Ariel Zetina  
(she/her)

TIME (PST)	ACTIVITY
8:00 – 10:00 AM	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p><b>Gender 101</b> Our philosophy is that in order to engage in working with trans and non-binary students, teachers have a responsibility to explore our personal sense of gender identity, expression, and perception. We will talk through relevant terms and expressions for voice work and information about aspects of transition.</p> <p><b>Introduce yourself with pronouns – Breakout sessions</b></p>
10:00 – 11:00 AM	<b>Break</b>
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	<p><b>Effective communication in lessons and classrooms</b> The onus of thoughtful and educated conversation with our trans and non-binary students is on us; in this section, we'll give examples and tools for navigating typical conversations that might occur in a lesson room or classroom.</p> <p><b>Psychological perspective</b> Gender dysphoria can be a barrier to all aspects of a trans person's life, including voice education. We will discuss some of the ways dysphoria can manifest and how to support students.</p> <p><b>Scenarios for Singing Teachers – Breakout sessions</b> Singing teachers encounter a wide variety of social, emotional, and musical encounters in their career. In small groups, participants will discuss how to best handle different scenarios as a teacher.</p>
12:30 – 1:30 PM	<b>Lunch</b>
1:30 – 2:30 PM	<p><b>Repertoire</b> Concerns about maneuvering repertoire requirements for courses, contests, and juries often come up in our conversations with voice teachers in working with transgender/non-binary singers. We will look at how cisgender/heteronormativity appears in voice repertoire and give some novel ideas for repertoire selections and casting.</p> <p><b>Discussing repertoire with students – Breakout sessions</b></p>
2:30 – 3:00 PM	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
3:30-3:30 PM	<b>Break</b>
3:30-4:30 PM	<p><b>Bonus Session with Queer Opera: Beyond the Pants Role: Mindful Casting for Queer Singers</b></p>

## Voice Pedagogy for Transgender and Non-Binary Singers Day 2 Bonus Session

### Beyond the Pants Role: *Mindful Casting for Queer Singers*

Sunday, March 21st

3:30 pm PST

Queer Opera is a performance organization that shares queer stories through opera, casts singers without the restrictive traditions of voice type or gender, and creates new experiences for audiences. Singers in the LGBTQIA+ community are provided a stage to present their authentic selves and explore operatic relationships that align with their identities, while singers that are straight allies have the opportunity to participate in queer storytelling. QO's latest production is a collaboration with the PSU Opera program to present Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief* with two non-traditional castings. In this session, conference participants will hear from QO's founder Chuck Dillard, stage director Rebecca Herman, and singers Jena Viemeister and Wyatt Jackson about the process of creating and participating in a gender swapping virtual opera during a worldwide pandemic! <https://www.queeropera.org>



**Chuck Dillard**



**Rebecca Herman**



**Jena Viemeister**



**Wyatt Jackson**

# VOICE PEDAGOGY FOR TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY SINGERS DAY THREE: APPLIED VOICE PEDAGOGY

Monday, March 22

Hosted by the Cascade NATS Chapter

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Liz Jackson Hearn  
(she/her/they/them)



Ruchi Kapila  
(she/her/they/them)



Vi Austenfeld  
(they/them)



Alexandra  
Plattos Sulack  
(she/her)



Ariel Zetina  
(she/her)

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:00 – 10:00 AM	<p><b>Respiration, pitch and registration considerations for trans/non-binary singers</b> Body-shaping garments can present challenges for singers in breathing, registration, and physical stamina. We'll discuss ways to support students who use body-shaping garments.</p> <p>Goals around pitch and registration receive a great deal of attention for transitioning singers. In this section, we'll discuss range and registration considerations for trans singers and ways to manage expectations while offering support for students' intentions.</p> <p><b>Discover your habitual pitch range – Breakout Sessions</b></p>
10:00 – 11:00 AM	<b>Break</b>
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	<p><b>Resonance and articulation</b> In this section, we'll discuss the ways resonance and articulation can influence gender perception in voice.</p>
12:00 – 1:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 – 2:30 PM	<p><b>Interdisciplinary Voice Care &amp; Client Advocacy for Trans and Gender Nonconforming Singers</b> Trans and gender nonconforming (TGNC) singers benefit from person-centered voice health education and maintenance, which may coincide or differ from standard recommendations given to cisgender singers. We will discuss vocal hygiene and voice care for TGNC singers from a framework of advocacy within the interdisciplinary voice care model. Client-centered healthcare perspectives, screening and intake for voice concerns, transgender phonosurgery, and speech therapy will be discussed in this section. As with all interventions related to gender affirmative voice goals and consideration for transition, the teacher's responsibility is to offer information within scope, TGNC-responsive voice care provider referrals if able and appropriate, and support without judgment or persuasion.</p>
2:30 – 3:00 PM	<p><b>Q&amp;A</b> <b>Closing remarks</b></p>

# VOICE PEDAGOGY FOR TRANSGENDER & NON-BINARY SINGERS DAY FOUR: APPLIED VOICE PEDAGOGY

Tuesday, March 23

Hosted by the Cascade NATS Chapter



Liz Jackson Hearn  
(she/her/they/them)



Alexandra Plattos Sulack  
(she/her)

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TIME	ACTIVITY
8:00 – 10:00 AM	<b>Voice masculinization tools</b>  Learn about ways to alter aspects of voice that can create a masculine-perceived presentation including range extension, registration maneuvering, resonance and articulation shifts, and gesticulation.
10:00 – 11:00 AM	<b>Break</b>
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	<b>Voice feminization tools</b>  Learn about ways to alter aspects of voice that can create a feminine-perceived presentation including range extension, registration maneuvering, resonance and articulation shifts, and gesticulation.
12:30 – 1:30 PM	<b>Lunch</b>
1:30 – 2:30 PM	<b>Master classes and breakout sessions</b>  Liz and Alexandra will guide select participants, and trans singers, through masculinization and feminization techniques in order to demonstrate teaching methods and give participants interactive learning opportunities.
2:30 – 3:00 PM	<b>Q&amp;A</b> <b>Closing remarks</b>

## Cascade NATS Chapter, Host



**Sarah Maines (she/her), Past President, Webinar Coordinator.** Hailed as a “natural, most charming” performer, mezzo-soprano Sarah Maines’ favorite roles include Margaret in *The Light in the Piazza*, Claudia in *Nine* and Maurya in *Riders to the Sea*. Dr. Maines is a member of the Portland Opera Chorus, voice faculty at the University of Portland, and Past President of the Cascade Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. She holds a BA in music from Berea College and MM and DMA degrees in voice pedagogy from Shenandoah Conservatory. As a practicing singing voice specialist, she administers voice habilitation to injured singers referred by Oregon Health and Science University and laryngologist Dr. James P. Thomas. She lives in Portland with Jasper, her faithful four-legged hiking companion. [www.themainestudio.com](http://www.themainestudio.com)



Soprano **Joannah Ball (she/her), President**, brings her shimmering, facile voice to a wide variety of performances from the operatic stage to the intimate chamber music setting. Recent solo performances include Handel's *Messiah* with Festival Chorale Oregon and Rutter's *Requiem* with Willamette Master Chorus. Other collaborations include Opera Theater Oregon's *Two Yosemite's* and Renegade Opera's virtual opera project, *The Secret Diaries of Pennsylvania Avenue*. Joannah is the current president of the Cascade Chapter of NATS. She maintains a busy private voice and piano studio in Forest Grove and is a voice instructor at Pacific University and Willamette University. She holds a Master of Music in Voice Performance with studies in Vocal Pedagogy from The Boston Conservatory and a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from Willamette University.



**Pollyanna Hancock-Moody's (she/her), Treasurer**, holistic teaching combines exercises for the body, mind and soul. She has taught music for over 20 years. Since COVID began Pollyanna has been teaching both private and group classes remotely. Pollyanna runs a busy private studio in SE Portland. In March 2020 Pollyanna founded the Couch Singers, where she performs weekly leading an international community of singers. She is the artistic director for the Cantata Pacifica choir, now a virtual choir. She also teaches singing and beginning piano at Portland Community College. For over 15 years she was part of the Marylhurst University music faculty and she taught as adjunct music faculty at Portland Community College, Rock Creek Campus. Pollyanna Moody, soprano, has sung with Light Opera of Portland, Fireside Carolers, and Portland Phoenix Choirs Theatrical Performers. She has been a featured soloist with many groups, including members of the Oregon Symphony, Vivace Voices, the Oregon Repertory Singers and Marylhurst Choral Union. She received her Masters in Vocal Performance from Portland State University. She is a certified Andover Educator (Body Mapping) and a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS). Pollyanna is also the Treasurer of NATS Cascade.

## Clinician Bios

**Alexandra Plattos Sulack (she/her)** is a performer, singer, teacher, and coach. She is the co-founder of The Voice Lab Inc., a studio that provides private music lessons around the world as well as voice services for transgender and non-binary folx. Recent publications include editing *One Weird Trick: A User's Guide to Transgender Voice*. As a coach, Ms. Plattos Sulack supports trans/non-binary performers, including the cast of *Stu for Silverton*, a new musical about America's first openly transgender mayor. Ms. Plattos Sulack frequently performs on the concert, operatic, and improv stages. She is a core member of Forte Chicago, performing operatic improv and sketch comedy; a troupe member of the American Immersion Theater; and Artist-in-Residence with the Cliff Dwellers Club of Chicago. Known for her comedic timing, she is the 2018 champion of *Opera on Tap Chicago's* Annual Diva Off competition, where she wowed the judges by hula hooping her way through Mozart's "Der Hölle Rache." She is a member of the National Association for Teachers of Singing (NATS), The Voice Foundation, Illinois Education Association-National Education Association, and the PanHellenic Honors Society. Alexandra lives in Chicago with her husband Nathan and their pet turtle, Boris.

**Ariel Zetina (she/her)** is the Executive/Marketing Assistant at The Voice Lab, and co-facilitates workshops on Vocal Pedagogy for Transgender Singers with Liz Jackson Hearn. While not a voice practitioner, Ariel comes to this work wearing many hats, as a voice feminization student, a trans woman, and a musician. Based in Chicago, she is an artist that focuses in music production, deejaying, writing, and nightclub curation. She has released several electronic music EP's and her DJ sets have been heard worldwide. She is also a playwright, and has had her plays performed in Chicago, California, NYC, and Baltimore.

**Ash (Amir Shirazi, they/them/theirs)** is an active composer, choral arranger, theatre sound designer, music director for choir and theatre, and songwriter. Ash currently serves as Artistic Director to Transpose PDX, which is a non-profit choral organization serving the transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming community of Portland and is comprised of the Transpose Community Choir and a cappella group Acchord. They are also the Committee Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee for the Portland Gay Men's Chorus, of which they are also a singing member. [Amirbshirazi.com](http://Amirbshirazi.com)

**Chuck Dillard (he/him)** is a musician at his best while working with others. Hired as a church pianist at age seven, he fashioned his musical beginnings, education, and career around the art of collaboration. As a concert pianist, Chuck enjoys collaborating with international performers in every voice type and instrument. An enthusiastic supporter of recital evolution, his concerts often include elements of photography, dance, spoken word, and other integrated art forms. In opera, Chuck works as a conductor, coach, and pianist for companies

including Portland Opera, Austin Opera, Opera Carolina, Central City Opera, and Piedmont Opera. His collaboration with Marin Alsop and Opera Colorado on a new production of Nixon in China is available on the Naxos label. As an educator, Dr. Dillard crafts his instruction around the belief that today's musician should be able to make a living in their art form while creating beautiful music in the process. Passionate about queer visibility in music, he strives to give a stage to anyone who wants to tell their story. Dr. Dillard received degrees in collaborative piano from the University of Colorado – Boulder (DMA) and the University of Maryland – College Park (MM). He has developed courses in vocal and instrumental accompanying, lyric diction, music theory, collaborative literature, and art song history. Chuck is the Assistant Professor of Collaborative Piano and Music Director of the Portland State Opera at Portland State University in Portland, OR.

**Jena Viemeister (she/her)** is a classically trained singer, actor, and award winning filmmaker for her most recent project entitled “Sven”, where she placed third and was voted audience choice in the film festival Labfest 2021. Her ability to transcend genre has led to working with Broadway's puppet designer, Michael Curry where she wielded a 14ft horse puppet under his direction, as well as roles such as Charity in the TV Pilot “Fairy Godmother's Apprentice” with FGA Movie, LLC, Little Red Riding Hood in Sondheim's “Into the Woods.”, Lapak the Dog in Janacek's “The Cunning Little Vixen” (performed in its native Czech language.), the title character in Britten's “The Rape of Lucretia”, Angelo in Shakespear's “Comedy of Errors”, and her most recent live performance as Mrs. Crachit in Stumptown's production of “A Christmas Carol” to name a few. Jena is a graduate of The Boston Conservatory with her Masters of Music in Opera Performance and Portland State University where she earned her Bachelor of Music in Voice. Since returning from Boston, Jena's performed with companies including Portland Opera, Opera Theater Oregon, Lakewood Theatre, Opera On Tap, Experience Theatre Project, Queer Opera, as well as her own creation, Divergent Opera. Through Divergent Opera, Jena collaborated with the Disability Arts and Culture Project to produce several accessible semi-staged recitals and a music video entitled, “Eve Song Project”, funded by a grant from the Chicago Academy of the Arts.

**Jordan Sanderson (he/him/his)** is the LGBTQ+ Resource Center coordinator at Purdue University - Fort Wayne. In his graduate work he focused on transgender and non-binary student experiences at American universities. His advocacy expands outside the university as he provides educational trainings and workshops through GLSEN of Greater Fort Wayne for K-12 educators in the surrounding area.

**Liz Jackson Hearn (she/her/they/them)** is a voice teacher and co-founder of The Voice Lab, Inc. in Chicago. She works with transgender and gender nonconforming singers, helping them develop healthy singing habits during medical transition and beyond. Liz is a passionate vocologist working to advance voice science education and advocacy. In addition to singing voice training, Liz works with trans and non-binary clients to develop a speaking voice that aligns with their gender identity and gives workshops and training for fellow voice practitioners. Liz holds a Master's Degree in Vocal Performance from North Park University and a Bachelor of Arts from The College of Idaho and also attended the Summer Vocology Institute at the University of Utah. Liz is the co-author of *The Singing Teacher's Guide to Transgender Voices* and author of *One Weird Trick: A User's Guide to Transgender Voice*.

**Rebecca Herman (she/her)** is Co-founder & Artistic Producer of Local Opera Local Artists (LOLA) in Austin, TX. In Feb 2020, she directed Dido and Aeneas for LOLA in collaboration with Panoramic voices. LOLA was in the process of producing a weeklong workshop of a new opera Good Country, which features a role written specifically for trans voices, in March of 2020 that was cancelled due to the pandemic. In 2019, she worked with Portland Opera as Assistant Director on Mozart's La Finta Giardiniera, collaborated with Queen City Opera on The Magic Bullets (Der Freischütz) and Die Walküre, Act I, and directed the workshop of Lardo Weeping, a new opera by Peter Stopschinski and libretto by Terry Galloway with LOLA. Recently, she directed The Breasts of Tiresias at Portland State University. For the past 2 seasons she has directed Queer Opera's weeklong workshops at Portland State University. Other directing credits include Otello, Don Giovanni & The Daughter of the Regiment at Austin Opera and Assistant Director for Turandot, The Magic Flute, & Rigoletto at Michigan Opera Theatre and several opera scenes with students and young artists at various universities and summer programs. Rebecca received an M.M. in Opera Direction from The University of Texas at Austin and both a B.A. in English Literature and a B.M. in Opera/Vocal Studies from Lawrence University.

**Ruchi Kapila (she/her, they/them), M.S., CCC-SLP** is a Bay Area-based speech-language pathologist, National Center for Voice and Speech (NCVS) trained vocologist, presenter and soprano with experience in acute care and acute rehabilitation hospital-based speech therapy. Ms. Kapila currently provides singing- and speech-based gender affirmative voice services in private practice. She is co-founder of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consultation and resource firm, interVESTED: Raise Your Voice and co-creator/co-host of the podcast The Hyndsyte Project, an interview series focusing on the experiences of Black and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) trans, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming activists and artists. Ms. Kapila also serves as member of Board of Directors, social media coordinator and EDI Committee member for Festival Opera in Walnut Creek, CA.

**Sebastien Eichvalds Rodriguez (they/them/theirs)** is a music educator from Raleigh, North Carolina, where they received their Bachelor's of Music from Meredith College and taught middle school choir. After moving to

Portland, Oregon in 2014, Mx. Eichvalds quickly found community with local LGBT choirs, leading to briefly assistant directing the Bridging Voices GSA Youth Chorus before leaving to help start a new project: Transpose PDX. Mx. Eichvalds currently serves as accompanist for Transpose Community Choir and sings in Acchord, the organization's a capella ensemble and outreach group, often arranging music for both choirs. Mx. Eichvalds also accompanies the Confluence: Willamette Valley LGBT Chorus and teaches early childhood music classes and private piano and voice lessons.

**William Sauerland (he/him/they/them/theirs)** is an Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies for the School of Music at Purdue University – Fort Wayne. He conducts the university choral ensembles, teaches classes in conducting and music education, and supervises student teachers. He was previously a Lecturer in Voice at San Francisco State University, and the Director of Choral and Vocal Studies at Chabot College in Hayward, California. Dr. Sauerland taught choral music at Lick-Wilmerding High School for six years, and served as Associate Music Director for the Grammy Award-winning Pacific Boychoir Academy.

Praised by the San Francisco Chronicle for his “limpid tone and astonishing eloquence,” Dr. Sauerland remains active as a professional countertenor. His recent solo appearances include the American Bach Soloists, Echoing Air, Festival Opera Company, Folger Consort, Handel Opera Project, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, Oakland Symphony Orchestra, and Pacific Chorale. A former member of the Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer, Dr. Sauerland has sung throughout the world, and recorded multiple albums for Warner Classics.

Dr. Sauerland received the Doctorate of Education in Music and Music Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. His research interests include social justice pedagogy in vocal music education, trans and gender expansive vocality, and student-centered teaching. His publications appear in the *Journal of Singing*, *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, *VOICEPrints* (Journal of the New York Singing Teachers' Association), and in the forthcoming book, *The Art of the Choral Music Educator*. As a Marshall Scholarship recipient, he earned a Master of Music and Post-Graduate Diploma in Advanced Vocal Performance from the Royal College of Music in London. Raised on a small dairy farm in Ohio, he received a Bachelor of Music in Music Education and Vocal Performance from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

**Wyatt Jackson (he/him)** is a bass-baritone, currently in his second year of study for his Master's degree in Vocal Performance at Portland State University. Wyatt has been teaching voice for a few years and has studied multiple operatic roles.