

# GRADUATE DICTION REVIEW SESSION

## CCPA KICK-OFF WEEK

### OVERVIEW

During CCPA Kick-Off Week, incoming graduate voice majors will be evaluated for proficiency in Italian, French, German, and English diction. The evaluation process will consist of: 1) a mandatory three-hour review session; 2) a written placement exam; 3) individual sung evaluations.

Prior to the written and sung placement exams, the Graduate Diction Review Session will review key concepts of lyric diction and the use of IPA as applied to Italian, French, German, and English. Regardless of prior diction experience, all incoming graduate voice students are strongly encouraged to review the following concepts in advance of the Review Session, so that any questions or areas of concern can adequately be addressed during the Review Session.

### GENERAL CONCEPTS

- Correct and consistent **pronunciation** of Italian, French, German, and English, as demonstrated through the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).
- Clear and consistent **enunciation** of Italian, French, German, and English, as demonstrated in performance (sung evaluation).
- Effective **expression** of Italian, French, German, and English, as demonstrated in performance (sung evaluation).

### ITALIAN: Key Concepts

- Correct and consistent use of IPA for all vowels, glides, and consonants, with specific attention to:
  - “c” and “g” (preceding “i” and “e”)
  - “gli”
  - “gn”
  - “h”
  - double consonants
  - proper vowel length in diphthongs/triphthongs
- Correct and consistent enunciation (singing) of all vowels, glides, and consonants, with specific attention to:
  - pure vowels
  - bright, lifted [a]
  - appropriate use of double consonants
- Word stress and inflection, with particular attention to:
  - vowel length in stressed syllables
  - musicality of consonants
  - clear distinction between double and single consonants

### FRENCH: Key Concepts

- Correct and consistent use of IPA for all vowels, glides, and consonants, with specific attention to:
  - mixed vowels
  - nasal vowels
  - “h”
  - [ʏ]
  - “e”, “è”, and “é”
  - “-ent” (when final in 3<sup>rd</sup>-person plural verb form)
- Understanding of elision

- Basic understanding of liaison
- Liaison
- Correct and consistent enunciation (singing) of all vowels, glides, and consonants, with specific attention to the formation of:
  - mixed vowels
  - nasal vowels
  - rounded, lifted schwa
- Expressive treatment of language, with specific attention to:
  - Vowel length = legato
  - Expressive treatment of vowel; accent d'insistance
  - Proper treatment of consonant sounds (rapid, late, and clear)
  - Consistent and appropriate use of elision
  - Appropriate use of liaison

### **GERMAN: Key Concepts**

- Correct and consistent use of IPA for all vowels, glides, and consonants, with specific attention to:
  - mixed vowels
  - vowel quality (open/closed)
  - vowel length (long/short)
  - diphthongs
  - [x]
  - [ç]
  - [ʃ]
- Correct and consistent enunciation (singing) of all vowels, glides, and consonants, with specific attention to the formation of:
  - mixed vowels
  - vowel quality (open/closed)
  - vowel length (long/short)
  - diphthongs
  - [a]
  - [x]
  - [ç]
  - [ʃ]
- Word stress and inflection, with particular attention to:
  - correct vowel length
  - expressive lengthening of consonant sounds
  - beauty and musicality of diphthongs
  - appropriate use of glottal attack

### **ENGLISH: Key Concepts**

- Correct and consistent use of IPA for all vowels, glides, and consonants, with specific attention to:
  - vowel sounds: stressed vs. unstressed
  - consonant sounds: voiced vs. unvoiced
  - diphthongs
  - triphthongs
- Correct and consistent enunciation (singing) of all vowels, glides, and consonants
  - timing and strength of initial, medial, and final consonants
  - diphthongs

- triphthongs
- voiced/unvoiced consonants
- length of fricative consonants
- Expressive treatment of language, with specific attention to:
  - word stress/hierarchy
  - syllabic patterns
  - expressive/lengthened consonants
  - appropriate use of glottal attack
  - unstressed prefixes
  - “the”
  - beauty and musicality of diphthongs/triphthongs

### **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Adams, David. *A Handbook of Diction for Singers: Italian, German, French*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Colorni, Evelina. *Singers' Italian: A Manual of Diction and Phonetics*. Schirmer Books, 1996.

Grubb, Thomas. *Singing in French: A Manual of French Diction and French Vocal Repertoire*. Simon and Schuster MacMillan, 1979.

LaBouff, Kathryn. *Singing and Communicating in English: A Singer's Guide to English Diction*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Wall, Joan, et al. *Diction: A Concise Reference for English, Italian, Latin, German, French, and Spanish Pronunciation*. Robert Caldwell, 2012.