

Creativity and Song

by Barbara U. Jones

All creation begins with an utterance. Our universe began with a bang; an infant is born uttering its first cries. Utterance is an integral part of creation, and is always going on. Singing is contained within the category of utterances, yet is separate from it because singing is a conscious creation. If we want to go beyond being an object of the nature of creation, a mere utterance, to being creators ourselves, then singing provides us with the most immediate way to do so.

Of all the arts, singing gives us the fullest and deepest access to the creative process. Visual arts set up vibrations with color and light which exist in two dimensions. These vibrations start outside the viewer. The vibrations received from hearing a song start from outside the listener. Only in the act of singing itself can the vibrations of creation begin within the creator. That vibration changes both the singer and the listener of the song.

But what about intellectual creations, don't they come from within the person, too? Yes, however intellectual development comes after the occurrence of the utterance. In fact, intellectual development is based and dependant upon it. Perhaps this is why we say we find resonance with an idea.

Take a few moments to conduct a simple experiment which will help you understand how singing can work in the creative process. First, pick a problem for which you are currently working on a solution. Go somewhere where no one can hear you, and then start singing about the problem. Don't worry about how you or the song sounds. Rather, focus on singing about the problem as you feel and experience it in the moment. You will find that the "job" of figuring out the problem very quickly becomes play. Through the process of singing, you will have created a different emotional climate from which some new ideas can spring forth.

Singing is such a powerful agent of creativity in part because of how the vocal process functions within us. The erection of the body in vocalization is an instinctive reflex. Whenever a person speaks or sings out loud, the body erects into the posture for the voice to work. Because the body can be consciously controlled by the use of the reflexive system of the breath, the ability to consciously and creatively inflect intent in melody (and speaking) is available to all. Joy, grief, ecstasy, astonishment – all the greatest emotions – then become our tools of grace.

Through the process of singing, a personal core value structure can be created and established. This happens in part through the resurrection of the instinctive expressive function utilized when singing. The act of inspiration, breathing in, in singing connects the singer through the call or beckon reflex with the audience and the achievement of a common emotional experience begins to fulfill the possibility of the intent of the song. These personal values are not created within the individual through intellectual memorization, but rather may be achieved by learning to become the instrument of the universal utterance in song.

Human beings are designed to sing. Therefore, they are not truly fulfilled until they do. Part of this fulfillment comes by being able to enter into and become a conscious participant in the creative ebb and flow of life. Because singing is accessible to everyone, all are given the opportunity to experience the shine, immanence, and illumination of the creative process.

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