

Klaus Heizmann

Vocal Warm-ups

200
Exercises
for
Choral
and
Solo
Singers



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200 Exercises for Choral
and Solo Singers

With an introduction by
Simon Carrington

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*Dedicated to
Victoria and Magnus*

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Introduction

When I retired from The King's Singers after my 25-year career, I had probably never sung a proper vocal warm-up in my life! Our idea in those days was to turn up for rehearsals or concerts having warmed up thoroughly on our own. As a teacher, it did not take me long to learn that this is wishful thinking. After ten years of teaching choirs, I have now used almost every warm-up technique known to man or woman!

Klaus Heizmann's collection is a wonderful new resource of ideas and techniques: practical, varied, challenging, relaxing and stimulating. I am always looking for new ideas, as I like to use a different set of warm-ups at every rehearsal with my choirs, and I tend to choose specific exercises to suit the repertoire for the day.

This collection gives us 200 excellent "tools-of-the-trade"; they are clearly labeled, intelligently set out, well-designed and extremely useful. I can't wait for the new semester so that we can get to work stretching ourselves in all these new directions, physically, mentally and vocally.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Simon Carrington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the start of "Simon" and a long, sweeping underline that extends under "Carrington".

Simon Carrington

Director of Choral Activities, New England Conservatory since 2001

Director of Choral Activities, The University of Kansas 1994-2001

Founder and co-director of The King's Singers 1968-1993

Preface

A chorus does not produce a balanced, homogeneous and natural sound automatically. It must learn to create this sound and develop an ear for it through targeted exercises. The purpose of choral voice training is not to provide singers with artistic singing instruction, but merely to give them the "tools" they need for fruitful collaboration in a chorus.

Fortunately, the importance of choral voice training has received increased recognition over the last few years. This publication is intended to provide chorus directors with a host of exercises to choose from. I collected them on the numerous trips I have taken to visit professional and amateur choruses in Germany and abroad. All chorus directors I consulted concerning this project had one thing in common: they were constantly in search of new and interesting warm-up exercises, because singing the same ones year in and year out results in lack of concentration and boredom. Consequently, I hope that these warm-up exercises can breathe some life back into chorus practice and make the singers curious about what their director will come up with for warming up at the next rehearsal.

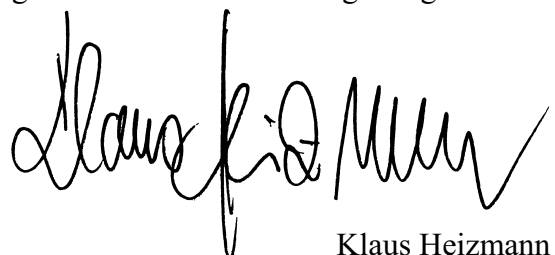
The importance of these warm-up exercises must repeatedly be explained to singers. They are just as important as the warm-ups an athlete does before training or competition. Even if some individuals do not notice any great progress in the beginning, the small improvements each singer makes will considerably enhance the sound of the chorus as a whole. Signs of fatigue will become less frequent and the volume and sound of the chorus will gain intensity, homogeneity and versatility. Moreover, the voice will become stronger, smoother and more resilient. It is also important for a chorus director to work intensely on his own voice, experimenting with all of the suggested exercises several times himself first and using only those exercises he feels comfortable with when appearing in front of the chorus.

Because this book is also to be marketed internationally, conventional international notation is used: eighth-note beams instead of flags. The small guide notes that appear at the end of each warm-up exercise indicate how high and low the exercise should be sung. However, they are only suggestions and can be raised or lowered as needed. Similarly, all of the dynamic symbols are merely intended to provide guidelines and are not binding instructions.

The objectives of the warm-up exercises overlap in numerous instances. For example, an exercise for vowel modification is also good training for expanding vocal range or dynamics. Some of the exercises will inspire children's choruses to sing with great enthusiasm (e.g. 7.22), while eliciting only a tired grin from adults. Therefore, you should select the right combination of exercises for your special needs from this veritable treasure chest of experience collected from numerous choruses and soloists.

The human voice is the most sensitive and delicate of all instruments. Only with careful and responsible use over the years can it be kept healthy and strong. Choral voice training and these warm-up exercises can make a valuable and long-lasting contribution to achieving this goal.

Wiesbaden, Germany

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Klaus Heizmann', with a stylized, flowing script.

Klaus Heizmann

Singing is the foundation of all music.
He who aims to compose must sing in his compositions.
He who plays instruments must be a master of song.
Thus, young people must be given thorough instruction in singing!

Georg Philipp Telemann
1681 – 1767