

# Acting Songs Workshop

The great performing artists of the musical theater have all had something in common: not only have they all been accomplished to varying degrees as singers and dancers, but they've all been organic actors. They've used their own deep, personal, idiosyncratic lives in their work, and that's why people respond to them so powerfully. They reveal their deepest feelings, needs and vulnerabilities in their performances, and that's interesting.



This workshop proceeds with a step-by-step process for analyzing, interpreting, and performing songs—in short, students will learn how to act songs. The techniques dealt with will be useful to aspiring musical performers in any genre, including musical theater, opera, jazz, rock and folk.

Students will work on songs assigned by the teacher, as well as songs they choose themselves, with a goal of singing pieces from various time periods and genres. Together the teacher and students will assemble a repertoire of contrasting songs.

We start with an emotional “check-in,” followed by training in a process that leads to the organic “living” of the songs. This process will include working on the lyrics as monologues, i.e. without the music, and then the gradual incorporation of melody and rhythm. Students will learn about making character adjustments, both physical and psychological, when required.

The workshop is for actors, singers, and dancers, of course, and will also be helpful to writers, directors, choreographers, designers, and teachers, as it gives the participants a visceral experience of the acting process, making clear what an actor needs as he/she prepares a performance. These techniques will enable the students to work as emotionally alive, theatrically inventive performers.

By the end of the semester each student will have learned about the relationship of acting to singing, and will have developed a reliable acting technique applicable to both; will have added to their knowledge of musical theatre history; will have experienced a collaborative working situation and a sense of what their place may be in the professional world of musical theater.

**David Brunetti** is a teacher, musician, and writer based in New York City. He teaches ongoing classes in bringing acting technique to songs in New York, and gives annual Master Classes in many locations, including Denmark, Sweden, London, and Brazil. He is the author of *Acting Songs*, which is used as a textbook in many training programs in the U.S. and internationally. David has piano on national television as the on-set pianist for the Vicki Lawrence talk show on FOX network. He has served as vocal coach and accompanist for Art Garfunkel, Judy Collins, Jennifer Holliday, Eartha Kitt, Leslie Uggams, Tony Award winners Donna Murphy and Faith Prince, film director Rob Marshall, film actor Paul Giamatti, and Academy Award winner Geena Davis. Composer: Off Broadway's *Trophies* (Cherry Lane Theater). Musical director/ keyboards: *Blues in the Night* (Broadway, Off-Broadway, London), *Nonsense*, *Forever Plaid*, and also for shows at the Roundabout and the Manhattan Theatre Club.



**This workshop is free and generously offered by the Yip Harburg Foundation.**

**This workshop will be offered on Fridays from 12pm – 1:30pm for the Spring 2016 semester and may be taken for ESC credit**

**This workshop can be customized by the teacher upon consultation**

**Please contact your mentor ASAP to register**