



Finding Your Voice

Saturday, August 21, 2010

In our chaotic times, staying present to ourselves and others can prove to be difficult. Do you ever feel that you are not speaking with your true voice? Do you ever feel that you are not listened to or heard? When you are nervous does your voice shake or crack, or when you are passionate about your values does your voice go higher and higher? When you are filled with feeling, does your sound flatten out or disappear into a whisper?

You may wish to find a centre of stillness, a rooted breath, a connected sound and an ease of expressing that can reflect the changing states of your thoughts, feelings and sensations.

This workshop is a beginning to explore just that. It will follow a basic progression of exercises to find your voice:

- *Relaxation exercises* to access the body's deep natural rhythms
- *Breath exercises* to connect to your vital energy, not the driven energy that habitually directs our day
- *Sound play* to bring your inner rhymes and vitality into an expression of an authentic self

Out of this experience you will have a simple plan of exercise to follow at home to keep your voice connected and free. You will also take away a basic understanding of how your voice works.

Staying present to ourselves and others in deep, quiet breath and moving, expressive sound can steady us in this changing world and bring to it a sense of lively participation.

This workshop is for adults of any age. Participants should come dressed in casual clothing (layers are recommended), avoiding clothing that is tight at the waist. There will be some work on mats on the floor.

Testimonials

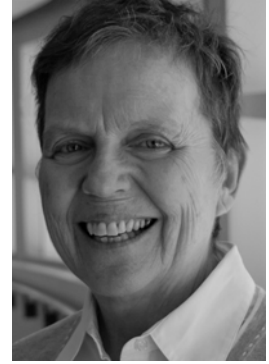
"Having had the benefit of this and other Festival Courses, I hope that many others will avail themselves of the excellent workshop leaders at the Festival."

"I liked the mix of physical exercises and group discussions."

"My only comment is that I wish the course had lasted longer. Any time spent learning from a Stratford Shakespeare Festival instructor is a treat."

Instructor

Ann Skinner is Head of Voice Emerita at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. She is also the former Head of Voice at the National Theatre School of Canada (Montreal) and George Brown College (Toronto). Ann has also taught voice and text in universities, studios and conservatories, at theatre and dance companies, and at conferences. Examples include Concordia University (Montreal); the University of Ottawa; Equity Showcase Theatre and the Maggie Bassett Studio (Toronto); the National Arts Centre (Ottawa), where she was co-director of the Student Young Companies; Caravan Stage Company (B.C.); LADMMI and La Compagnie Marie Chouinard (Montreal); Magdalena International Voice Festival for Women (Wales); and Open Space Gallery (Victoria, B.C.), where she was an artist-in-residence.



With colleagues, she has collaborated to found new ventures: with Richard Pochinko, renowned teacher of acting, clown and mask, she founded the Theatre Resource Centre in Ottawa, an actors' training co-operative; with Bryan Doubt, a widely respected teacher of movement and text for actors, she ran an actors' training studio in Montreal; with Marion Woodman, an internationally recognized Jungian analyst, and Mary Hamilton, graduate of the National Ballet School and former professor of dance at the University of Western Ontario, she founded BodySoulRhythms[®], an eight-day intensive for women, teaching a psychological process including body, voice and mask. This work has taken her across Canada and the U.S. and to the U.K. and Europe.

She is also external examiner for the voice studies program at the University of Texas, Austin.