



## The Singer's Library

### Progressive Pedagogy: An Insider's Look at Inside View Press

BY BRIAN MANTERNACH

Author Scott McCoy discusses how a second edition and an additional condensed version of his book *Your Voice: An Inside View* are making the study of pedagogy more easily accessible, as well as future planned publications of his self-owned publishing company.

Inside View Press is an independent publishing company focused exclusively on promoting topics related to the voice and teaching the voice. Immersed in vocal pedagogy, its publications range from Stephen F. Austin's *Provenance*, which examines historic pedagogy through a contemporary lens, to Kenneth W. Bozeman's *Kinesthetic Voice Pedagogy* (highlighted in the November 2017 *Classical Singer*), which inspires efficient singing through an understanding of vocal acoustics.

The book at the center of Inside View Press, however, is its namesake, *Your Voice: An Inside View*. Written by Inside View Press founder Scott McCoy, the book was released in 2004 with a second edition following in 2012. A more condensed version, *Your Voice: the Basics*, was released in 2016 in the hopes of making difficult pedagogical concepts more accessible.

In my conversation with the author, we discuss how the first book has changed over the years, how its information was pared down for *The Basics*, and what the future holds for Inside View Press.

**When you wrote the first edition of *Your Voice: An Inside View* more than 14 years ago, were you hoping to address elements of voice pedagogy and voice science more thoroughly than in other texts that were available at the time or were you trying to bring new topics to light?**

All of the above. The original impetus grew out of the materials I assembled for my own classes that I was teaching. We were entering that age



Brian Manternach

where multimedia options were presenting themselves that simply didn't exist when earlier pedagogic textbooks were written.

I found that in my own teaching in the classroom I was having to pull together so many diverse resources to cover everything that I wanted to in terms of audio files, videos, [and] high-quality images. Basically, I created that first edition out of my own need for materials. It was the first resource that actively combined the multimedia content with the printed text.

### What were the biggest changes and updates for the second edition in 2012?

I did some reorganization—some updating of information. Because the science progresses relatively rapidly sometimes, there were already new discoveries that weren't in the first edition that got incorporated into the second edition—and some information that was no longer as pertinent or valid as in 2004, and things that I thought that I could make clearer to help people understand better. We updated some of the graphic content, we updated a lot of video content, we updated things to enhance understanding. It really was a major overhaul—I think some 70,000 new words from the first edition to the second edition.

One of the big issues we kept running into was that we needed products for the multimedia content that were compatible with both Apple and PC systems. That worked fine, initially, but then it turned out that every time Apple introduced an update to their operating system it would render our software completely unusable. So we'd have to go back and recompile and reprogram everything. We started on CD-ROM

and then we went to DVD-ROM, [but] at this point most computers don't even ship with a CD drive at all! So now we've gone to hosting the media content online.

We have branched out and we have iBooks versions now [for both books] that have all of that media embedded directly to stream from within the book, along with high-resolution color images and lots of extra "frills," shall we say, to enhance the reading experience.

### I would imagine that's a particularly welcome feature for the current generation of college students.

You might think so, but I can tell you that the vast majority of people are still going with physical copies of all of those books. I think it's because of the ease that you then have in making notes and

highlighting. It's quite surprising. When we introduced *The Basics*, for the first year it was only available as an eBook, and we got so many requests by the end of the first year to have a physical copy of it that we went ahead and did that physical edition. Now we are probably at about a 7- or 8-to-1 ratio of people who are using the physical copy versus an electronic copy.

### Since all of the multimedia content is now on the companion website, will you update the website with new information, perhaps in lieu of new editions of the books?

Yes, there will be new anatomical images that go up on the website soon. But I can tell you that we are in the process of getting started on the third edition [of *An Inside View*], which will include a new

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chapter on the brain that Lynn Holding is preparing. That [edition] will primarily have updated images, a little bit of fine tuning, and some more practical information about how to apply what we know about anatomy, physiology, [and] acoustics to singing and to teaching singing.

**Will any content from the second edition be removed for the third edition?**

I will probably scale back the chapter on voice analysis because I think that may go into more detail than a lot of people seem to be needing at this point. And there will be some simplifying in the discussions of acoustics and some streamlining of talk about things such as how the vocal folds oscillate. We are really just dealing with good, up-to-date information

and not talking about stuff that really is no longer considered to be scientifically valid.

**In *The Basics*, you say that *An Inside View* has become "the most widely used primary textbook in voice pedagogy courses throughout the United States and Canada." Why do you think the book has been so successful?**

One of the things that people consistently tell me is that they like the book because they can understand it—that it's readable and that it explains things that often are what people would be thinking are high-end intellectual concepts that might be difficult to understand. But the arguments are presented in a way that regular singing teachers can understand what's going on without having

to have a deep background in physics and calculus and everything else.

**If *The Basics* was intended to be, as you say in the book, "a bit less dense" and more "user friendly" than *An Inside View*, what elements of the book needed to change the most?**

It really was intended for a different level of instruction. The original *Inside View* is still in use in large numbers of universities and colleges both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. But there are so many schools at this point whose pedagogy program or curriculum is limited to a single-semester course that needs to cover anatomy and physiology, vocal health, and acoustics, and teaching practicum. By adapting

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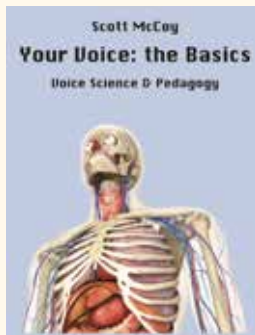
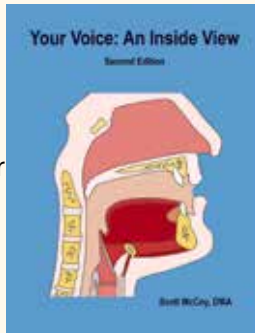
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## Book Review

One of the criticisms most frequently levied against voice scientists is that they spend so much time in the world of equations and formulas that they forget how difficult the concepts are for the lay arts-oriented person to understand. Author Scott McCoy combats this image with his text *Your Voice: the Basics*. A distilled version of *Your Voice: An Inside View*, the newer book's discussion of anatomy and physiology is limited to the primary structures involved, excluding those with secondary roles. Similarly, voice acoustics and resonance are explained, as McCoy says, "in language that really is the language of musicians and of singers rather than the language of acousticians."

With *The Basics*, McCoy offers readers the best of both worlds. Those new to the field can obtain essential knowledge without being bogged down by discussions that are beyond their present needs. Meanwhile, those ready for a deeper level of understanding can easily find it in *An Inside View*.

At the heart of the matter, McCoy created two versions of *Your Voice* partly because there is more up-to-date research to include, but also—to his credit—because he has found even better ways to present the information. His continued dedication to making these topics approachable and intelligible should encourage singers and teachers throughout the voice community. —*Brian Manternach*



I think now, especially with teachers under a certain age, there is much more respect for what actually happens physiologically and acoustically and a much better integration of art with the science and technology and how we can balance that fact-based pedagogy with the need for artistic singing. Because, ultimately, if it's not beautiful and it isn't expressive, it doesn't matter.

### **As its founder, publisher, and editor in chief, what can you tell us is on the horizon for Inside View Press?**

We have just released a new book called *Great Teachers on Great Singing* by Robin Rice that [features] interviews with 14 of America's most prominent singing teachers. We have companion anthologies coming out for the book *Literature for Teaching* [by Christopher Arneson] that will have repertoire and guided vocalizations and exercises to prepare the singer to sing that specific music. . . . We've got a number of projects that are in the works.

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the book, we were able to get down to the things that might be able to be really approached in that single-semester course where there is so much other information that also needs to be acquired by the students.

### **Do you think singers and voice teachers are intimidated by trying to keep up with all the new information voice science is constantly providing?**

I don't think it is intimidating in any way for the current generation of singers and teachers who are entering the academy and beginning their teaching lives. For those of us who are way closer to retirement than we are to the start of our

careers, the field has evolved so hugely, and the amount of information that we now have access to, and the amount of, really, pedagogic truth that we know is just vastly deeper than it was.

We can trace back to people like [William] Vennard and [D. Ralph] Appelman as the roots of some of this objective looking at the singing voice—the exploration of the singing voice. Everything that preceded it was really based on intuition and practical experience, so we had generation upon generation of singing teachers who taught really well but taught things that were physiologically and acoustically simply incompatible with reality.