

OSTINATO WANGARATTA INC.

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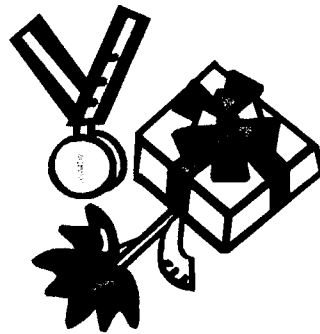
NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 2005

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'Happy First Birthday Ostinato.'



Q: Dad, why do the singers rock left and right while performing on stage?

A: Because, son, it is more difficult to hit a moving target.

Opera is when a guy gets stabbed in the back, and, instead of bleeding, he sings.

A soprano died and went to Heaven. St Peter stopped her at the gate asking, "Well, how many false notes did you sing in your life?"

The soprano answers, "Three".

"Three times, fellows!" says Pete, and along comes an angel and sticks the soprano three times with a needle.

"Ow! What was that for?" asks the soprano.

Pete explains, "Here in heaven, we stick you once for each false note you've sung down on Earth".

"Oh," says the soprano, and is just about to step through the gates when she suddenly hears a horrible screaming from behind a door. "Oh my goodness, what is that?" asks the soprano, horrified.

"Oh," says Pete, "that's a tenor we got some time back. He's just about to start his third week in the sewing machine".

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A CHORISTERS' GUIDE TO KEEPING CONDUCTORS IN LINE.

The basic training of every singer should, of course, include myriad types of practical and theoretical emphases. One important area which is often neglected, however, is the art of one-upmanship. The following rules are intended as guides to the development of habits which will promote the proper type of relationship between singer and conductor.

1. Never be satisfied with the starting pitch. If the conductor uses a pitch-pipe, make known your preference for pitches from the piano and vice-versa.
2. Complain about the temperature of the rehearsal room, the lighting, crowded space, and of a draft. It's best to do this when the conductor is under pressure.
3. Bury your head in the music just before cues.
4. Ask for a re-audition or seating change. Ask often. Give the impression you're about to quit. Let the conductor know you're there as a personal favour.
5. Loudly clear your throat during pauses (tenors are trained to do this from birth). Quiet instrumental interludes are a good chance to blow your nose.

6. Long after a passage has gone by, ask the conductor if your C# was in tune. This is especially effective if you had no C# or were not singing at the time.
7. At dramatic moments in the music (which the conductor is emoting), be busy marking your music so that the climaxes will sound empty and disappointing.
8. Wait until well into a rehearsal before letting the conductor know that you don't have the music.
9. Look at your watch frequently. Shake it in disbelief occasionally.
10. When possible, sing your part either an octave above or below what is written. This is excellent ear-training for the conductor. If he hears the pitch, deny it vehemently and claim that it must have been the combination tone.
11. Tell the conductor, "I can't find the beat." Conductors are always sensitive about their "stick technique" so challenge it frequently.
12. If you are singing in a language with which the conductor is the least bit unfamiliar, ask her as many questions as possible about the meaning of individual words. If this fails, ask her about the pronunciation of the most difficult words. Occasionally say the word twice and ask her preference, making to say it exactly the same both times. If she remarks on their similarity, give her a look of utter disdain and mumble under your breath about the "subtleties of inflection".
13. Ask the conductor if he has listened to the von Karajan recording of the piece. Imply that he could learn a thing or two from it. Also good: ask, "Is this the first time you've conducted this piece?"
14. If your articulation differs from that of others singing the same phrase, stick to your guns. Do not ask the conductor which is correct until backstage just before the concert.
15. Find an excuse to leave the rehearsal about 15 minutes early so that others will become restless and start to fidget.

Make every effort to take the attention away from the podium and put it on you, where it belongs!



PURCHASE OF MUSIC BOOKS

The set of 3 books – Gilbert & Sullivan 1 & 2 and English Folk Songs are available @ \$16.50 for purchase by choir members who would like to keep their own copies.

PLAQUE

The golden plaque is now attached to the conductor's stand acknowledging the creator John van Riet – *Thank you John*. A sign depicting the name of our choir – OSTINATO – will be made up when we have finalized a design for a logo. This will also be attached to the front of the stand (and one for our Illustrious Conductor's back or bottom).

CATHEDRAL CONCERT

The date for this concert at the Cathedral is now confirmed for the 19 June 05.

BOGGY CREEK VINEYARD LUNCHEON PERFORMANCE

Is still on for 13 June 05. Details later. Please mark your diaries.



Q: Did you hear about the female opera singer who had quite a range at the lower end of the scale?

A: She was known as the deep C diva.

Q: How can you tell when a tenor is really stupid?

A: When the other tenors notice.

Q: How do you tell when your lead singer is at the door?

A: He can't find the key and doesn't know when to come in.

We have another wonderful contribution from our choir's creative poet – **Ann van Rooyen** - who wrote the following piece in November 2004, to commemorate our first "official" concert performance on 7 November 2004. Ann has amalgamated 20 songs that were sung in the program into the following 9 verses as a conversation between two characters – Juanita and Peter.

JUANITA and PETER

Juanita: There was an old house which belonged to Juanita.
When she heard her bell, she knew it was Peter.
"Oh Peter," she said, "when you rang my bell....
I knew it was you with some stories to tell!!!"

Peter: "Oh, nobody knows the trouble I've seen
I met up with Willy who's now a 'has-been'!
And sadly, old Moses is now six feet below.
Juanita, there's sorrow wherever I go."

Juanita: "Did you also hear of that one stilly night
When Joshua came and gave mothers a fright?!
Whilst singing a lullaby, Josh made such a racket
Walls started to crumble and no one could 'hack it'!"

Peter: "Juanita, my dear, if you think that is gory
I've been to a land which could tell you a story!
In Cambria the dead were heaped with the dying.
So grim, it made Daniel weak with his crying!"

Juanita: "I heard in South Africa they speak in three tongues ..
Depending on his 'try or race one belongs.
New Zealand, it seems, also has its own way
how to cope with a lingo, or two, so they say."

Peter: "Yes, but in Australia it all seems quite fair.
They've chosen an emu and 'roo', I declare!
Those creatures can only step forward in dance.
They can not step back .. and they call that *advance!*"

Juanita: "And talking of locals ... revered Charlie Mopps
Went down to the Mitta and drank too much 'hops'.
Then drowned in that river whilst filled with 'good cheer'.
His life was quite happy, not morbid or drear."

Peter: "Another who drowned, but took his own life,
That swagman who was in some serious strife.
Was he not the one who came 'round Cape Horn?
Who left wife and kid, in Australia born?"

Juanita: "Oh Peter, dear Peter, you're getting confused.
You mix up some stories. Too many you used!
Just try to leave all those sad tales behind!
Now, let us make music! It *may* change mankind!"



Ann van Rooyen
Member of Ostinato.