

ADVANCED VOCALS AND VOCAL ARRANGING

Vikki Cook – Calvin Worship Symposium- January 24-26, 2008

I. Humility and The Worship Team Singer

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." – Mark 10:45

Humility Defined: "Humility is honestly assessing ourselves in light of God's holiness and our sinfulness." ~ C.J. Mahaney

- A. A musical/spiritual endeavor
- B. No room for "divas"

II. Singing Like a Team (a team is greater than the sum of it's parts)

- A. Warm-up together

"Consider an excellent football team and you realize several things. First, they study the same plays, stretch and workout together, do pre-game warm-ups together and are basically on the same page. They also care a great deal about the outcome of the game. It's personal. Put all that together and you have...a team. Study, stretch, workout, and warm-up and care...a perfect formula for singers!" ~ Betty

- B. Warm-up exercises...examples

- C. When introducing a new song, make sure everyone understands:
(take time to talk about it...)

- 1. The concept
- 2. The meaning
- 3. The purpose

- D. What is the musical style of this song? (what's the genre, the groove, the overall vocal sound you're wanting to copy? Who do you want to sound like?)

- E. Make sure everyone is singing the SAME melody, and the SAME rhythms.

- 1. Develop BIG EARS.
- 2. Use your eyes!

- F. Come to every rehearsal with a pencil/pen.
 - a. Mark difficult entrances

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- b. Breaths and cutoffs
- c. Slides and inflections
- d. Dynamics
- e. Vibrato or straight tone

G. The Clap Method

H. Time to record (to check accuracy and blend)

- 1. Audio
- 2. Video

III. Song Arranging

- A. Variety The alto, tenor, and bass parts, and even the melody/soprano can:
 - 1. Vary in texture/tone (breathy or resonant, bright or covered, etc.)
 - 2. Vary in straight tone or vibrato
 - 3. Vary in harmonic density
 - 4. Vary in range...octave
 - 5. Vary in volume

These variables allow a song to breathe, allowing it to rise and fall, giving the song "life" and emotion.

- B. The "Story Line"
- C. Give a song room to grow

IV. Brushing Up on Your Skills

- A. God deserves our best effort
- B. Serves our leaders and our congregation
- C. Includes practicing, preparing, and staying current on trends
 - 1. Skill helps us to:
 - a. Learn songs quickly
 - b. Execute songs with proficiency
 - c. Make minimal mistakes
- D. Allows us to grow in creativity
- E. Frees us to worship God

V. Q & A