

MATCHMAKER

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You choose

PREFACE

I'm sure you're eager to find out what's the only shortcut when you want to master vocal jazz.

Well, it's also the hardest thing to do. For some. Because most of us have our vocal jazz heroes. And we want to be like them.

But do we have the talents to match? Or the stamina and will to make it happen regardless?

Ultimately the best thing is to simply become the best jazz singing version of you. Inspired by your idols - *powered and shaped by your specific talents*. That means it'll be unique. And it also means you'll be using your strengths. A source of confidence.

But how do you do that?

A perfect match

The quickest and easiest way is by **matching your taste and talents to a style and repertoire**. This guide is meant to help you do just that. In my view there are three major singing styles in vocal jazz.

Don't feel like you have to make a choice between these styles, because you don't. They are here to help you define your voice, taste, talents and style.

Choosing a style that best fits your talents will make things a lot easier.

But, as long as you are motivated and willing to make the effort, the sky is the limit. And you can take bits you like out of every category.

It's a thin line

These styles are quite defined. Reality isn't. Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald did their fair share of entertaining but can also be considered instrumentalists. Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett are entertainers that would probably consider themselves storytellers, which they are as well.

If you're completely new to vocal jazz, you'll find a lot of artist names in this guide you can check out. It's a great way to get an overview of the world of vocal jazz. Then, after listening you can always come back to this guide.

Now, let's start the process and introduce you to the three basic styles of jazz singers. Enjoy!



ENTERTAINER

Type

The smooth and/or powerful sound of your voice is your greatest talent and you aim to reach a large audience. You're an entertainer.

Examples

Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Michael Bublé, Diana Krall, Astrud Gilberto.

Crucial skills

Sound and performance.

Repertoire

There are two options: the more popular jazz standards and Bossa Novas are sure to please, but popular songs from other genres that lend themselves to be performed in a 'jazzy' style are possibilities as well.

Singers with strong voices might want to go with the 'crooner' repertoire; just look at the albums of Frank Sinatra to find fitting songs. Singers with smooth and soothing voices may stick to ballads, slow swing and particularly Bossa Novas.



STORYTELLER

Type

Your main focus is on the lyrics and telling the story. You're an actor, perhaps even more than a singer. You're a storyteller.

Examples

Shirley Horn, Abbey Lincoln, Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, Peggy Lee.

Crucial skills

Diction and timing.

Repertoire

Any songs with 'story like' lyrics, or any song with lyrics that strongly resonate with you; as you are the one who has to deliver its lines. Ballads and slow swing or slow Bossa Novas are most suited since they provide more time to deliver the lyrics effectively.

There are some songs out there with interesting lyrics that are a little bit more up-tempo, but you'll have to look beyond the popular repertoire. The storyteller should definitely look at composer songbooks.

Verses, introductions to songs from musicals, provide additional lyrics and sometimes perspectives on songs; they are often very well suited to storytelling.



INSTRUMENTALIST

Type

You see your voice as your instrument. You like vocal acrobatics and improvisation above all else. You're an instrumentalist.

Examples

Bobby McFerrin, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Rachelle Farell, Betty Carter, Mark Murphy.

Crucial skills

Musical hearing and/or theory.

Repertoire

Bebop or other tunes with complex melodic lines set to words, or the opposite: songs with simple melodic lines, that allow you to make all kinds of ornaments and variations on them.

Any style will do, though for beginning improvisers the most simple songs with the least amount of chords are best suited: blues, or not too complex songs that mostly stay in one key like Mack the Knife, Summertime, But not for me, etc.

HERE'S HOW YOU CHOOSE

1. Define your talents and which style best suits these talents.
2. Define which style(s) your favorite singers belong to most. Different from your answer for question 1? Are you sure about your answer? If so, continue to the final question.
3. Define what skills(s) you lack that are necessary for the singer you want to become. These skills can also come from a style you didn't choose in question 1.

Now you should have a much better defined idea of what you'll have to do in order to become the singer you want to be. If you want my help, my complete online course 'Jazz Singers Academy' is all you need.

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