

EXPRESS YOURSELF!!!!!!

WHAT IS PHYSICAL EXPRESSION?

Physical Expression is “unplanned movement” or “body English” which can speak volumes in the communication between human beings. It is important and necessary that all singers take advantage of that natural, intrinsic physical communication to support the characterization, underline the energy and add flavor to the performance. It is a subtle, yet powerful way a performer can show the audience that the lyrical and musical story are felt to the bone. That movement is not choreographed or determined ahead of time, but what the individual would naturally do when feeling the emotions of the lyric and music.

WHENEVER THERE IS NO PLANNED MOVEMENT, PHYSICAL EXPRESSION SHOULD EXIST.

Many people on our risers are totally unaware of how much their bodies are a part of their communication. So where do you begin?

1 Identify different physical communication and mime it. For example:

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU ARE

1. Impatient: Glance at a clock, pace, tap feet, drum fingers, frown
2. Worried: Wring hands, fidget, run fingers through hair
3. Frightened: Mouth opens (gasp), quicken breathing, trembling
Bug eyes
4. Happy/Excited: Smile, jump up and down, clap hands, fidget

AN EXERCISE - WITH AND WITHOUT

While singing a song (ballad), the Director and the Choreographer give the chorus “permission” to move while they sing, insist on BIG movement. It doesn’t matter what they do...just BIG MOVEMENT. After a bit, the direction is to STOP moving while continuing to sing. The chorus must stand ABSOLUTELY STILL. Continue the moving and stopping so that the chorus will feel how constrained the stillness is and how liberating the movement is. Feeling the difference is a key to make the singer aware of how necessary and important it is for our bodies to express the music. Hear the difference! The voice becomes unlocked as well.

This exercise can be done during rehearsal to any one of the repertoire songs at any time to loosen the Physical Expression.

UNITY IN PHYSICAL EXPRESSION:

Yes, there needs to be unity in Physical Expression...and that unity would be determined by the distinction that no one person should be “over the top” in the ensemble. Each person’s physical expression should not be so noticeable as to distract from the unit. All should be in the same character and emotion dictated by the musical and lyrical story.

CONCLUSION

Like anything else, it takes time and patience and will feel awkward at first. Keep at it - it will pay off visually AND vocally.