

AEC Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP)
Conservatorio Superior de Música de Navarra (CSMN)
Pamplona, Spain on 27 February – 2 March 2025

Mother Tongue: European Identities in Heritage, Pedagogy, and Repertoire

VoCon

02/03/2025 – h. 09:00-13:00

9:00-9:10 greetings and introduction

9:10-10:00 welcome presentation curated by voice teachers and students from Conservatorio Superior de Música de Navarra (CSMN), Pamplona (Spain)

10:00-11:00 performance

Parafonías: Altered States through Movement and Sound

Blanca Tolsá Rovira (dancer/performer/coreographer, Barcelona – Spain)



When two sound waves of the same frequency are emitted simultaneously, we perceive them as a single sound. However, when two sound waves with a slight difference in frequency meet at a point or in a region of space, they interfere with each other, producing a third wave in the human ear. Parafonías explores the frictions that occur between the sphere of movement and the sphere of voice, and how, by playing with the distances between the two, a third, unintended entity emerges. The starting point was to

observe the harmonies that occur between body and voice during a communicative act: the ways in which, when speaking, gesture and intention support the word, language, to emphasize its communicative mission. The research is born from the desire to undo the unison and dismantle dominant associations in order to connect with unknown meanings and ways of doing, allowing for less intuitive relationships and thus the emergence of unexpected imaginaries.

Blanca Tolsá Rovira was born in Ontinyent, València, in 1991. After graduating from the Professional Dance Conservatory Institut del Teatre, Barcelona she began her career as a dancer at ITdansa Youth Company, where she toured internationally with repertoire by Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, Sidi Larbi, Ina Christel Johannessen, and Montse Sánchez/ Ramón Baeza, among others. Since 2016 she has worked with Lipi Hernández, Ariadna Montfort in *Moaré*, Zappalà Compagnia (IT), Raquel Klein in *Wu Wei*, for which she received the Premi Butaca for best female performer in 2020, Constanza Brncic in *Registres Evanescents* (Auditori de Barcelona) and Georgia Vardarou in *The moment she hovers over the ocean*. She was part of the Cèl·lula#1 production of the Mercat de les Flors with the piece *Flamingos* by Albert Quesada, of the Cèl·lula#4 with the piece *Supermedium* by Núria Guiu and of the Cèl·lula#5 with the piece *La Quijá* by Paloma Muñoz Siberia. Since 2019 she has been undertaking her first research into the intuitive associations between the abstract voice and movement, with the aim to deconstruct them and give rise to new imaginaries. This has been possible thanks to artistic residencies at La Caldera, Ca l'Estruch, Roca Umbert, CC Barceloneta, CC Parc Sandaru, DevirCapa Faro (PT), and Periferie Artistiche (IT). During 2024 she has been an emerging artist at the creation centre El Graner (Barcelona) where she has developed her second piece, *Parafonías*, a duet with live sound that continues to deepen the relationship between movement and voice. Besides her work as a dancer and choreographer, she is currently studying for a Higher Degree in choreography at the Conservatori Superior de Dansa Institut del Teatre.

11:00-11:15 break

11:15- 11:45 open floor session

The Singer, The Person - A Holistic Approach To Teaching Voice -

Karin Bengmark (University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg - Sweden)

Elisabeth Melander (Malmö Academy of Music, Malmö - Sweden)



How to make tacit knowledge visible in the voice classes. Karin and Klisabeth will share the experiences related to their peer writing process - the why, how and when. They will illuminate topics that they have

missed in former literature like for example hormonal impact on the voice, neuroscience and the musical brain, vocal identity, vocal health and how to sing with authenticity.

Karin Bengmark is a qualified vocal instructor at the University of Gothenburg's Academy of Music and Drama, where she has taught for over 20 years. Her focus has been on jazz, pop, rock, and folk music. In addition to her academic role, Karin has maintained a thriving private teaching practice. In recent years, she has also worked as a musician within the Church of Sweden. This experience has led her down a sacred path, and they have begun composing music for use in their parish. Karin has created numerous musicals for children, theme songs for both children and adults, as well as a variety of mass and choral music. Her record label, Frostros Records, has released 10 albums featuring their own productions and those of other artists. Learn more about Frostros.

Elisabeth Melander is a renowned Swedish vocal educator specializing in jazz, rock, and improvised singing. She pioneered jazz and rock singing education in Sweden and has taught at esteemed institutions like the Malmö Academy of Music and the Vietnam National Academy of Music. Beyond teaching, she's an active performer, composer, and arranger. Her artistic projects, such as "Reflections Of A Voice" with JazzAppear, have garnered critical acclaim. Melander has also ventured into acting, appearing in Ingmar Bergman's production of "King Lear" at the Royal Dramatic Theatre. This concise summary highlights her key achievements and contributions to the field of music education and performance.

11:45-12:15 open floor session

Composition as a Means for the Development and Inclusion of Mother Tongues in Music

Ester Andújar (Berklee College of Music, Valencia - Spain & Escuela Superior de Alto Rendimiento, Valencia - Spain)



Musical composition is a powerful tool for exploring and developing the inherent musicality of each mother tongue. Behind every form of music lies folklore, cultural identity, and rhythm, all of which reflect the unique character of a community. Similarly, each language possesses its own rhythm and identity, which can be incorporated into contemporary musical creation to expand artistic horizons beyond traditional folklore. This approach allows musicians to bridge their language and artistic expression, fostering an authentic and personal musical development. When a musician, especially a singer or improviser, works on developing expressive abilities, they must explore how specific syllables and phonemes influence articulation and fluency in performance. In this sense, investigating the impact of

one's mother tongue on the compositional and expressive process becomes essential for strengthening cultural identity while expanding the creative possibilities of the performer or composer. In the context of jazz and modern music, musicians face the challenge of exploring new ways to compose and express their art through their mother tongues, thus contributing to greater cultural diversity in contemporary music. This proposal aims to offer tools and methods for integrating mother tongues into composition and the creative process, fostering a repertoire that is both inclusive and representative of Europe's diverse identities.

Ester Andújar is a renowned Spanish jazz vocalist celebrated for her innovative and expressive style. Born in Valencia, she has built a distinguished career performing internationally and collaborating with renowned musicians. Her artistry encompasses a diverse range of influences, including jazz, soul, and contemporary music. Known for her powerful and nuanced voice, she seamlessly blends languages like Spanish, Valencian, English, and Portuguese in her performances. Andújar's discography includes several acclaimed albums, showcasing her evolution as a composer and interpreter. She has garnered critical acclaim for her ability to bring authenticity and innovation to every performance, captivating audiences worldwide. Beyond her musical pursuits, Andújar is recognized for her artistic integrity and social consciousness, addressing issues like gender violence and historical memory in her work.

12:15-12:45 workshop

Unlocking the Creative Impulse in Vocal Expression

Laura Conti (Conservatorio di Musica "Antonio Vivaldi", Alessandria - Italy)



This session delves into how vocalists can unlock their creative potential by incorporating techniques rooted in Psychology, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), and Ericksonian hypnosis. Designed to address cognitive and emotional barriers, it integrates visualization, kinesthetic imagination, and sensory

awareness to guide participants toward a state of "flow" – a concept coined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, characterized by effortless creativity and spontaneous vocal expression. By engaging techniques that bypass rational thought processes, the session helps participants release limiting inner dialogue and connect with a more natural, authentic vocal expression. These methods emphasize the interplay between physical sensations and vocal imagery to ignite spontaneous ideas. By releasing limiting beliefs and bypassing self-critical reflection, vocalists can achieve greater freedom and authenticity in their performance. This session aims to equip vocalists with practical tools they can readily integrate into their creative practice. It offers a concise yet transformative introduction to techniques that foster authentic, uninhibited vocal output.

Laura Conti is a renowned jazz vocalist, professor of jazz singing, and former member of the doctoral board and academic council at the A. Vivaldi Conservatory in Alessandria, Italy. Her illustrious career began at the age of eighteen with a debut performance alongside the legendary Giorgio Gaslini. She has collaborated with renowned artists such as Paolo Conte, recording four CDs with him, including one as the lead vocalist. In 2003, her anthropological research on traditional Piedmontese music earned her the prestigious Costantino Nigra Award. With a prolific discography exceeding 20 recordings under her own name and with esteemed artists and ensembles, Conti has performed extensively throughout Europe and North Africa. Conti holds a degree in Psychology and a diploma in Singing. She furthered her expertise in the United States by specializing in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and hypnosis. Her published works include "Vocal Ki" (BMG, 2005), "La Voce" (I.S.U. Università Cattolica, 2006), and "Analisi del Jazz" (I.S.U. Università Cattolica, 2006).

12:45-13:00 final discussion / planning VoCon future meetings

about VoCon

VoCon is a Europe-wide platform for vocal Jazz, Pop, Folk and all interested teachers in higher music education. It provides the need for sharing good practice, thoughts on education, and differences in vision and mission in the various European countries. It is a very personal practice-based platform that aims to connect professional teachers in higher education on a 'person to person' base. It is a learning community, practicing what it preaches and also provides and protects free space for sharing topics that emerge on the spot.

~ VOCAL TEACHERS (VoCon) MANIFEST ~

When being a member of VoCon you are:

- a vocal teacher Jazz and/or Pop and/or Folk in higher music education;
- in an institute that is connected to or open to attending AEC/PJP;
- eager to meet and greet European colleagues in our working field;
- interested in sharing thoughts, vision, mission and practical working forms with colleagues;
- primarily interested in sharing questions instead of giving answers;
- part of a learning community, open to shift angles that may offer new insights;
- critical friend to your colleagues and their contribution in both meetings and VoCon online communication;
- part of a non-strategic platform, that develops from the inside out;
- open to sharing research results, contribute knowledge and be a sounding board;
- open to educational experiment and keen on exchanging all kinds of educational experiences;
- an ambassador that reaches out to colleagues inviting them to take part in VoCon.