



Casella postale 17
CH-6605 Locarno Monti
www.organicoscenaartistica.ch

presents:

WeBe3 in Performance

Enter the rich, lively, spontaneous world of vocal improvisation with **WeBe3 - Rhiannon, David Worm and Joey Blake**. These three cornerstones of the world a cappella community began improvising together in 1986 as original members of Bobby McFerrin's Voicestra and continue to tour with them internationally. They are also founding members of the innovative a cappella ensemble SoVoSo', as well as the vocal/instrumental Bowl Full of Sound.

With a deep, shared, musical knowledge, WeBe3 creates totally improvised concerts, blending genres, creating soundscapes, and moving seamlessly from the center to the outer edge.

Bass singer **Joey Blake** has an unmistakable style, fluid as it is unique, full of surprise and delivered with masterful grace. The ease with which he uses his voice like an instrument is nothing less than spectacular and speaks to his seasoned depth as a musician.

David Worm brings his rich, evocative tenor voice to the mix, introducing horn-like improvisations and physically animated soloing, utilizing his endless array of sounds, and holding the time as an extraordinary vocal percussionist.

Rhiannon's pliable, passionate, rhythmic voice holds the melody while inventing absolutely arresting language and poetry revealing her as a singer of soaring invention and pinpoint musicality. She invites the spirits to enter what seems to be a performance, but is also a ceremony in modern times that changes energy and lives.

WeBe3 is magical and skillful. Together Rhiannon, Joey and David hold spirit and musical integrity in steady hands.

Bobby McFerrin says about them: "WeBe3 is one of the freest musical experiences anyone will ever encounter, giving rare insight into the true art of vocal improvisation."

WeBe3 Bios

Rhiannon, Joey Blake and David Worm have a long musical history together. They are original and continuing members of Bobby McFerrin's Voicestra since 1986, touring with Bobby internationally. They are all co-founders of the innovative vocal ensemble SoVoSo', vocal/instrumental ensemble Bowl Full of Sound and their newest project, WeBe3.

Rhiannon is a performer, master teacher, composer and recording artist with five albums on her own RhiannonMusic label. She continues to perform and teach internationally, is initiating a certification program based on her unique approach to vocal improvisation and is working on her first book. Since 2008 she teaches at Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Joey Blake is a gifted performer, recording artist, producer and recording engineer. He teaches vocal improvisation and ensemble development at Berklee College of Music in Boston where he also produces emerging artists nationally.

David Worm performs and records with his band Glass House as well as with SoVoSo', Left Hook and The Miribai Ensemble. He also composes for Bay Area dance companies, including Robert Moses' Kin, Stanford Lively Arts, Project Bandaloop and Axis Dance as well as scoring for film.

Discography:

SoVoSo—SoVoSo, Primarily A Cappella, 1997
Truth and Other Stories—SoVoSo, Primarily A Cappella, 1998
Bridges—SoVoSo, Primarily A Cappella, 2000
Then and Now—SoVoSo, Primarily A Cappella, 2005
Seasonings—SoVoSo, 2002
Crack the Nut—SoVoSo, 2004
Out of the Blue—Rhiannon & Bowl Full of Sound, RhiannonMusic, 2003
Toward Home--Rhiannon, RhiannonMusic, 199
Live on Tomales Bay--Rhiannon, RhiannonMusic, 1996
Flight—Rhiannon, RhiannonMusic, 2000
In My Prime—Rhiannon, RhiannonMusic, 2005
Through My Eyes—Joey Blake, 2008
Songs from the Singing Soul—Joey Blake, 2008
Why Follow—David Worm and Glass House, Organelle Records, 2001
Questions—David Worm and Glass House, Organelle Records, 2005
Circle Songs—Bobby McFerrin & Voicestra, 1997
WeBe3 – live and improvised, World Tour 2007, 2007

Websites:

Joey Blake—www.joeyblake.com

Rhiannon—www.rhiannonmusic.com

David Worm—www.sovoso.com

www.webe-3.com

WeBe3 Workshops

It is rare to have the opportunity to study with all 3 of these devoted teachers in one setting. Individually and as a trio they possess the capacity to encourage, stimulate and challenge every singer in the circle. Teaching collaboratively, they use a format that allows deep work in listening, ensemble blend and soloing.

Students develop the skills and courage to express their own spontaneous sound and discover how music can create community and change lives.

Workshops can be selected from the offerings listed.

Joey Blake takes us to the bottom of the sound, illuminating bass lines, groove, chord changes, and complex rhythmic structures. Joey has extensive experience in multiple musical styles and uses that lifetime of training to teach each student vital aspects of ensemble vocal music.

David Worm trains singers in percussive vocal techniques, understanding and singing the sounds and rudiments of a wide variety of percussive instruments, interpreting various time signatures and singing “the pocket”. David also takes students through an overview of improvisation as it pertains to negotiating chord changes as well as exploring intervallic scale-based soloing over one chord vamps, basic blues and the chord progressions of popular song.

Rhiannon, a devoted teacher for 35 years, is in a category by herself, exploring the skill and spirit of improvisation. Her expertise lies with the connection between body and voice, teaching the invention of melody, harmony, rhythm, language, and story while guiding the singer towards the heart and soul of their musical self.

Course Topics:

1. Inside WeBe3—David, Joey and Rhiannon

Using a lecture/demonstration format with plenty of time for questions, these longtime collaborators will describe in detail their artistic development, process, music, recordings, live performance and teaching methods.

2. Sing for a Change--David

In this interactive class participants will be introduced to the concept of improvisation over existing chord changes. Students will apply intervallic scale technique over basic one chord ostinattos, blues progressions and more advanced musical landscapes. Students will learn to analyze bass lines and navigate intervals in order to understand the relationship of the chord progression and scales inside the song itself. A must class for vocalists who want to “push the envelope” of their sound.

3. Beat Box and Beyond--David

Explore the new exciting world of Vocal percussion. We'll go from learning the basic elements of vocal percussive articulation used to create the sounds of various percussion instruments from

around the world to producing the sounds necessary to simulate an entire drum kit. The workshop will explore drumming instruments, rudiments and patterns indigenous to Western and European music and polyrhythms from around the world. This exploration will help singers become comfortable with various meters by understanding the contrapuntal relationships that make up these various rhythms, it will also help strengthen phrasing and a sense of song form, emphasizing singing inside the time, a feel invaluable in performance and improvisation.

4. The Instrumental Singer--Joey

This workshop is designed to help each participant develop an understanding of the role of each instrument in a traditional rhythm section, as it relates to specific styles of music and their ensemble instrumentation. Students will then learn the proper technique necessary to recreate these ensembles vocally. There are many ways to create music vocally, and they do not all require the use of melody. The voice can also be used as a paintbrush to create textures and soundscapes, providing a visual, mental and emotional experience for the listener.

The ultimate goal is to give each participant a renewed sense of freedom, discovering their own style of vocal expression and improvisation. We also intend to break down barriers by reinforcing each singer's confidence in the ability to take risks.

5. The Voice in the Digital World--Joey

This class is designed to help aspiring singers develop their knowledge of digital recording and signal processing for the voice. The new developments in digital technology have provided all of us with the tools necessary to self-produce recorded music at a professional level.

Joey will explain and demonstrate techniques to apply this new technology in a live or recording studio situation. We will also demonstrate the proper mic technique as it applies to each setting.

6. The Mystery and Method of Improvisation--Rhiannon

Rhiannon has built her process for teaching vocal improvisation on the idea that we must be solid in musical skills, develop intuition and be available to the mystery and grace that exist when creating music spontaneously.

In this class we create our own music in a safe and dynamic circle of singers. We each find our unique and personal sound, working alone, in pairs, and in ensemble as we meld intuition and invention with skill and heart. We delve into connecting the forms of spontaneously composed music and storytelling. Rhiannon's many years in the theater as well as her life in music have resulted in this being a dynamic and natural blend.

We hone our skills in melody, harmony and rhythm as well as vocal tone, texture, and dynamics, stretch our intuitive courage, tell our stories, then take our voices wherever we have always wanted to go.

7. The Improvised Performance--Rhiannon

Because Rhiannon believes that improvisation belongs in performance, she has developed a process to make improvisation stage-worthy. This series of exercises unfolds in a carefully articulated progression. Working in circle, students first improvise melody, harmony, rhythm, counterpoint and interlocking parts in solo and small ensemble games. Then in ensemble exercises using the natural connection of body and voice, they learn to reveal a vulnerable, authentic sound. They also practice using language, both invented and in their native tongue, sung and spoken, as part of their musical repertoire.

Many of these games become strong performance pieces and teach the singers how to invent a group sound without a leader. Learning to improvise as an ensemble with shared responsibility and power teaches deep listening, generosity, courage and musical awareness.

8. Build a Bridge—David, Joey and Rhiannon

This bold experiment in music making is a participatory ritual, allowing a sharing of culture through the medium of music, the voice in all its forms and colors. Singers gather in a circle with a conductor in the center. Four improvised patterned parts are given to the Soprano/Alto/Tenor/Bass sections. These patterns are changed and shifted by the conductor so that the singing continues for long stretches, creating a rich, deep and joyful experience. This form calls forth a wonderfully primal connectedness among the singers, strengthening relationships and developing leadership. Singers are invited to solo over this hearty vocal orchestra, which requires both courage and musical focus.

Working this way stretches both individual and ensemble capability, a synergistic approach to music making.

Because we sing in an invented language in this form, it is accessible across borders and cultures, making it possible to create this musical magic anywhere on the planet.

Improvisation is a beautiful musical force and a wonderful life- changing tool because it teaches us to stay awake and be present in every moment to our options, gifts and challenges.

WeBe3 Reviews:

JAZZ REVIEW: Life is a joyous song to WeBe3

By Don Heckman, The Los Angeles Times, November 30, 2007

Vocal trio WeBe3 capped the 2007 season at the Vic in Santa Monica on Wednesday with a stunning performance affirming the premise that no-holds, spontaneous creativity can be both viscerally entertaining and intellectually stimulating.

All three members of the Bay Area group -- Rhiannon, Joey Blake and David Worm -- are veterans of Bobby McFerrin's Voicestra and longtime associates in the challenging task of expanding the vision of what the human voice is capable of, individually and collectively.

The selections were largely improvised. In general, each singer took on basic ensemble responsibilities: Rhiannon mostly singing the lead melodies; Blake providing rich-hued bass lines; Worm offering stunningly effective vocal simulations of a drum set. But that was just the beginning, with each singer also contributing a colorful array of vocal sounds, timbres and sometimes quirky effects to the ensemble's musical palette.

When the first number began, with Blake setting up a grooving bass line and Worm adding

propulsive percussion accents, it appeared that the trio's spontaneous improvising would simply consist of free-flying vocals over ostinato foundations. But the WeBe3 singers soon made it clear that they were far too musically sophisticated to fall into such a trap. Shifting rhythmic gears, changing keys, inventing new riff patterns on the fly, breaking suddenly into three-part harmonies, their collective improvising was not just imaginative and swinging, it was also formed with surprisingly cohesive structures.

After a few numbers, the trio was joined by pianist Otmaro Ruiz. Playing with extraordinary subtlety, Ruiz provided colorful carpets of dark, repetitive chording, calypso rhythms and melodic fragments interfacing in utterly compatible fashion with the singers' roving vocals.

At times, Rhiannon or Blake urged the enthusiastic capacity crowd to sing musical phrases -- often two at a time -- with impressive results, expanding the envelope of creativity to embrace the entire room. And it was during those moments -- as well as in the set's final numbers -- that the most vital aspects of WeBe3's performance came fully alive: joy in creativity; joy in life; joy in the song. No wonder Rhiannon concluded the program with the final, affirming phrase: "If I could be a song, I would be perfect."

East Bay Express, Berkeley, California, by Larry Kelp

December 29, 2000

"These three thrive on improvisation, and the way they inspire each other onstage shows they belong together. Since they met as founding members of Bobby McFerrin's a cappella orchestra Voicestra fifteen years ago, Rhiannon, Blake and Worm have been torn between exploring their individual muses and coming up with excuses to get back together and do what they do so naturally: just make up chants and vocal rhythm patterns, toss out spontaneous lyrics, and go on that journey of collective exploration into the spiritual unknown that is normally the domain of jazz instrumentalists."



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