

# Using Movement to Energize Your Choral Rehearsal

Dr. Andrea VanDeusen  
Assistant Professor of Choral Music Education  
East Carolina University  
Email: vandeusena17@ecu.edu

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*“If the body goes, the voice will follow.”*  
– Phyllis Curtain

## Develop Vocal Technique Through Imagery/Sensation Movement

### Alignment

- Yoga principles
  - Stretch large and small muscle groups
- Body awareness/body mapping
- Act out activities (swimming, picking apples, balance fruit, be a tree swaying in the wind)
- Scrunch/wiggle face, jaw, tongue

### Breath – Breath and Body Connection

- Breath circles – “spin”
- Act out activities (sip through straw, pant like a dog, laughing)

### Resonance – Vowel shapes, soft palate lift

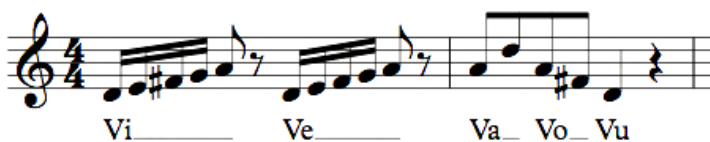
- Lift hand beside head – soft palate
- Trace vowel shapes with finger/hands



- Elephant trunk



- Small and Big Circles



# *Movement in Rehearsal*

## **Intonation**

- Lift/lower arms – raise/lower pitch
- Step rhythm of piece
  - Arms move to show phrases
- Release tension in body

## **Internalize Rhythm**

- Step rhythm - move
- Tap beat – cross across body/heart

## **Phrasing**

- Conduct selves
- Stepping Beat/Stepping Rhythm of Vocal Line
  - Experience space
  - Step backwards for breath (breathing in time)
- Foreground/background
  - stand when you have the most important part
- Tug of War – awareness of own and others' parts
  - Find a partner singing a different vocal line
  - Hold onto each other's forearms
  - Pull and release with your own vocal line's phrase
- Singers create movement for phrase
  - Deeper musical understanding
  - "Move in a way that shows connection to breath"

## **Ball Pass to Music**

- Pass ball around circle to beat of music (change passing direction during activity)
  - Smooth, legato pass
  - Space changes with tempo
  - Turn body with your pass
  - Eyes on receiver
  - Receiver ready to receive ball
  - All eyes follow ball
  - All bodies show beat externally
- Afterward, have singers write down adverbs associated with different types of passing
  - Use cards in warm up and rehearsal to quickly change tone color, emotion

# Theory Behind the Practice

## Dalcroze

- Kinesthetic learning
- Rhythmic errors as result of body-mind disconnect

## Laban<sup>1</sup>

- Time
- Space
- Energy/Flow
- Weight

Quick	Sustained
Dab	Press
Flick	Glide
Punch	Wring
Slash	float

## Final Thoughts

- Demonstrate first
- Be confident in your delivery
- Explain *why* you are moving
- Embrace the possibility of failure
- Build trust
  
- Singing is a full-bodied human activity
- Singing and the body are connected
  - Western culture often disconnects
  - Movement is one way to reconnect

*“Body, mind, spirit, voice: It takes the whole person to sing and rejoice.”*  
– Helen Kemp

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Jordan and Shenenberger – see reference list.

## References

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- Music Excerpt:** Geistliches Lied, Op. 30 – Johannes Brahms, ed. Daniel Garrick [www.cpdl.org](http://www.cpdl.org)

# Geistliches Lied, Op. 30

Paul Flemming (1609-1640)

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)  
Edited by Daniel Garrick

**Lento** ♩ = 64

*p e dolce*

Organ

Pedals

5

Org.

Ped.

8

**A**

S. *p* Lass dich nur nichts nicht dau - ren mit -

A. *p* Lass dich nur nichts nicht

T. *p* Lass dich nur nichts nicht dau - ren

B. *p* Lass dich nur

**A**

Org.

Ped.

12

S. Trau - - ren, sei stil - le; wie Gott es

A. dau - ren mit Trau - ren, sei stil - le; wie Gott es

T. mit Trau - - - ren, sei stil - le; wie

B. nichts nicht dau - ren mit trau - ren, sei - stil - le

Org.

Ped.

16

S. fügt, so sei ver - gnügt, mein Wil - le, mein Wil - le!

A. fügt, so sei ver - gnügt, mein Wil - le!

T. Gott es fügt, so sei ver - gnügt, mein Wil - le!

B. wie Gott es fügt, so sei ver - gnügt.

Org.

Ped.