

FOMICHEVA
BREATH MANAGEMENT
METHOD[™]

A series of breathing exercises created and developed by renowned opera vocal coach and collaborative pianist Elena Fomicheva to give opera performers the skills they must have to be able to successfully function at a high level.



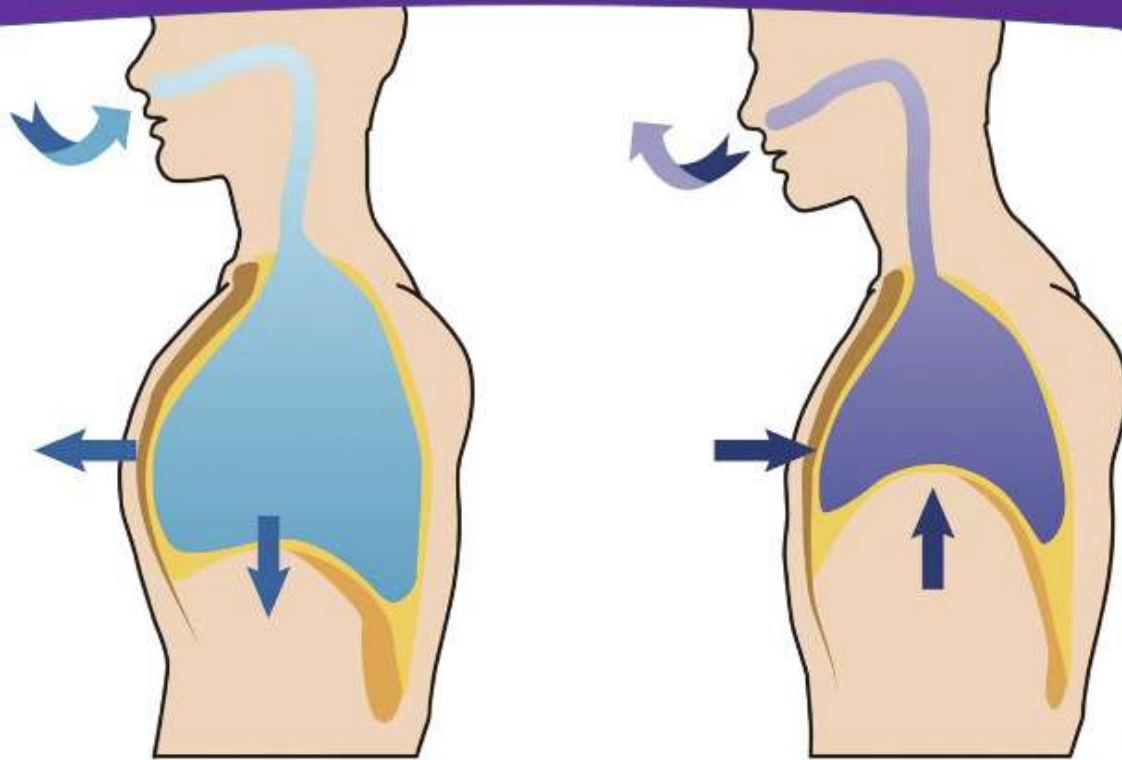
The FOMICHEVA BREATH MANAGEMENT METHOD™

is a throughout consistent technique designed to improve posture and to facilitate a smooth consistent flow of breath,

while helping to calm the cardiovascular system, lowering stress and anxiety levels.

These two actions are interconnected and they are crucial to any type of performance, from the basic level to professional stage.





One of the most essential breath control exercises is learning to manage the expansion and contraction of the diaphragm to fill the lungs with air and then gradually control the release of air progressively increasing the duration of each inward breath and exhalation. The singer breathes in for a count of four, and then exhales for a count of eight, repeating the exercise with longer exhalation counts (ten, twelve, fourteen).

DIAPHRAGMATIC EXPANSION



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SUSTAINED DIAPHRAGMATIC HISS/LIP TRILL

An addition to exercise number one can be hissing the air out steadily on exhalation or lip trilling to create a slight resistance to the air flow.



GENTLE BUT EVEN AIR FLOW

This exhalation breathing technique is one of the most efficient breathing exercises for singing and must be mastered for effective singing. With a lighted candle approximately eight inches away from the face, the singer should breathe deeply while keeping chest and shoulders steady. While exhaling the singer try to blow continuous light and steady stream of air on the flame to bend it but not extinguish it, keeping track of the number of seconds the singer can bend the flame. Gradually increase the duration time each day. This exercise assists the singers to increase the control required when singing long phrases.

3



4

RAISED SOFT PALATE BREATHING

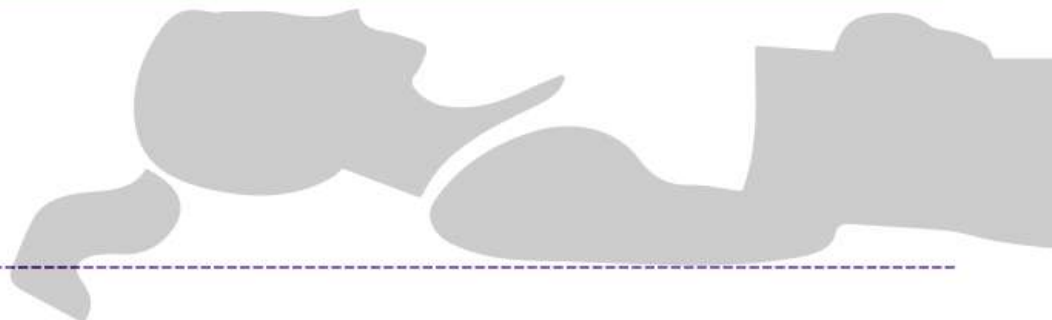
Also called “Lift to a Smile”. This breathing exercise expands the intercostal muscles of the chest, allowing the diaphragm to fully descend and expand. The singer should sit upright with a straight back while stretching the arms up to shoulder height feeling the muscles in the back stretching. With the arms at shoulder height, the singer opens the mouth as if they are gently yawning. Then bring the arms back to rest on the thighs while turning the yawn into a smile while continuing to breathe quietly. This exercise encourages proper breath posture and lifting of the palate.



5

EXPANDED PELVIC FLOOR BREATHING

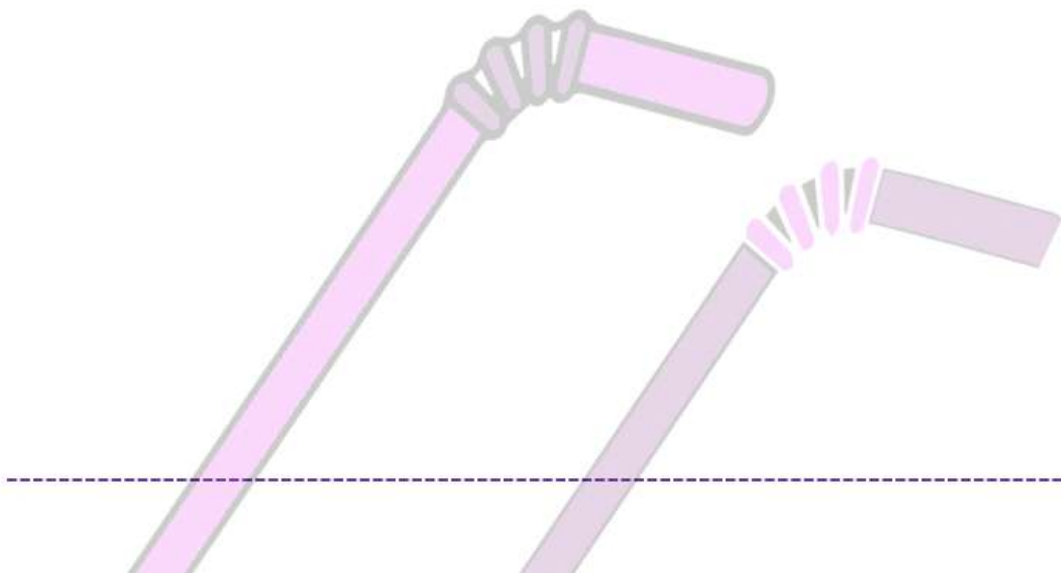
Another exercise that can prove to be useful is for the singer to lie down flat on the back facing the ceiling while resting the hands on the lower ribs with the fingers positioned towards the belly button. The singer should then concentrate on filling the lungs with air starting with the expansion of the lower abdomen. The singer should experience the abdomen rising along with the hands expanding upward and outward smoothly with the expansion of the chest. This expansion influences the body from all sides. The singer then should gradually breathe out in a slow steady stream while trying to maintain the expansion of the ribs. Wait for five seconds before repeating the steps. This exercise should be done ten times per day before breakfast and ten minutes before going to bed. This exercise aids in developing the proper breath management technique for singing.



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Resistance to breath pressure must be developed and can also be learned and experienced by blowing air through a straw. The resistance from the straw develops a sense of an air stream that is more compact and efficient as if comes through the throat, helping to establish proper breath management, while preventing the forcing of air too strongly against the vocal folds. This kind of hyper functional phonation causes a collapse of the breathing mechanism, loss of clarity in phonation, and greater anxiety created by the shortness of breath caused by the inefficient expulsion of the breath.

STRAW FLOW EXHALATION





A vocalization exercise that teaches the efficient use of breath and efficient tone is humming scales or tunes. Humming is an incredibly efficient use of breath and of diaphragmatic action in singing. It takes only a small amount of air to hum, even for long periods. This is because the action of air flow against the vocal folds is very easily balanced between the action of the diaphragm and the resistance of the vocal cords to the air flow. This perfect balance is sometimes called “flow phonation” because of the ideal flow of air. The sound is produced by an ideal breath action that can be experienced by humming.

SUSTAINED MELODIC FLOW



Staccato exercises of scales or tunes have a great benefit to prevent excessive breath expulsion. If one is unable to execute a staccato properly, one cannot manage their breath successfully, and will find themselves constantly running out of breath. Practicing this skill, with a precise onset and a decisive release, is the key to teaching how to prevent the collapse one's breathing mechanism, which destroys the singer's breath control. In other words, learning how to manage the onset of a sound and the release of that sound through staccato helps create the proper action of the diaphragm. This proper action is based on breath balance, not thrusting air out to begin a sound, and not collapsing the air at the release. The sound should begin and end with precision, which relies on the proper diaphragmatic action. Staccato done correctly is vital to learning and maintaining the proper posing for that precision, which in turn creates better breath management.



ELENA FOMICHEVA

PIANIST | COACH | TEACHER | DIRECTOR



Elena Fomicheva is a pianist with a balance of extraordinary musicianship and courageous intimacy, a mix of tremendous power and absolute

clarity. Grounded in Russian musical school training and tradition, Elena Fomicheva started her piano journey at the age of six in Saint Petersburg, Russia. In 2006 she graduated from the Mussorgsky Music College and was directly accepted into the Saint Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory, the oldest and leading music Institution in Russia and one of the most prestigious Conservatories in the world.

Elena's artistic activity includes appearances in well-known venues such as Glazunov Hall and Glinka Capella in Saint Petersburg, Russia, Rudolfinum Concert Hall in Prague Czech Republic, Mozarteum University in Salzburg, Austria, Philharmonic Hall in Vilnius, Lithuania,

Jordan Hall in Boston, Merkin Hall in New York, and Steinway Hall in both in New York City and Miami.

Elena started her career as a collaborative pianist in 2012 pursuing her Master's Degree in Collaborative Piano at New England Conservatory in Boston, Massachusetts where she studied with Dr. Cameron Stowe a leading specialist in the study and performance of song recital repertoire, and Jonathan Feldman renowned solo recitalist.

Receiving much recognition and critical praise during her Master of Music studies, Elena was awarded sponsorship by the Mabel Louise Riley Foundation Scholarship via New England Conservatory.

Throughout her career as a collaborative pianist, Ms. Fomicheva worked with such noted international artists as Bo Skovhus, Christa Ludwig, Barbara Bonney, Greer Grimsley, and Susan Mentzer.

In 2015, she joined the Grand Art Concert Series National Tour as a Grand Art Artist in Residence, before becoming the principal Vocal Coach, Musical Director, and Assistant Opera Director at New World School of the Arts in Miami.

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www.elenafomicheva.com