



## **About the Class**

Clarice Assad's *VOXploration* explores the human voice as an instrument capable of reproducing complex sounds, colors, rhythms, and moods. It integrates various forms of art, including theater, dance, music, and visual arts to compose scenes and musical numbers in a highly interactive, powerful, and intuitive way.

## **Who is it for?**

A *VOXploration* experience can have as few as 5 to as many as 40 participants in a group and last one day, a weekend, or longer, but the principles are the same.

It is for anyone interested in making music in creative ways, including composers, songwriters, improvisers, arrangers, music lovers, and singers. It is also particularly useful to vocalists interested in improvisation, or those who are open to exploring their voices' full potential. The class features examples of how the techniques and tools can be useful in real-life performance and recording situations.

## **What to Expect**

The class begins with a group of people in a circle. Participants use their voices and bodies as instruments to create visual and sonic soundscapes. It provides easy and intuitive access to the untapped potential of the voice and pulls participants effortlessly into their bodies and the present moment. Because of the class's spontaneous nature and the fact that all human beings are completely unique, every class is its own special episode.

There are two main types of exercises: creative and technical. Creative exercises focus on imagination, originality, and inventiveness. Technical exercises train the ability to focus and memorize patterns, as well as promote better breathing and vocal warmups.

Musical elements like rhythm, dynamics, melody, and harmony are explored. The workshop also utilizes different types of singing, musical styles, and genres, both individually and as a group. Participants are introduced to the concept of sound painting, gestural and dynamic composition, and learn simple conducting techniques. Scat singing, double and triple tonguing, beatboxing, and body percussion movements are also introduced.

After a small break, participants are separated into smaller groups to create their own compositions, with an emphasis on performance and theatrical elements. These groups are given certain conditions and rules to follow. For example, a group may be asked to focus on an “operatic vocal performance” or to create a medley of arrangements of well-known tunes by creating dissonant vocal accompaniments. As they work on these small presentations, I oversee their progress until they are ready to present their creations to the entire class. What begins as an improvisation ends up being a more structured, collective composition. At the very end of the class, the group gathers for a circle singing session, followed by a discussion of the experience.

*VOXPLOATION has received awards from Brazilian foundations such as CAIXA CULTURAL and SESC, as well as American grants from New Music USA and the McKnight Foundation. It has traveled to Brazil, Qatar, Europe and has been taught extensively in the United States, creating ripples of positive and lasting effects in many young and adult people's lives.*