

# A Singer-Songwriter's Approach to Vocal Performance of Their Original Songs: An Insider's View

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**ABSTRACT:** Statistical data suggests that through media like radio, television and streaming, the music listening public engages with the output of singer-songwriters (SSWs) on a daily basis (Surveyspro, 2016). The *singer* is key to this engagement, yet existing scholarly discussion is focused primarily on industry and non-industry, etc views/perspectives of SSWs as a group (Bentley, 2016; Holman Jones, 2007; Jackson, 2007; King, 2012; Lanksford Jr, 2010; Potter & Sorrell, 2012; Reynolds, 2009; Rogers, 2016; Whiteley, 2000; Williams & Williams, 2016; Zollo, 1958, Zollo, 2016). Beyond the suggestion that for SSWs the process of singing their own original songs is comparable to singing covers of other artists' compositions, the existing literature offers little discussion on the singer component within the musical product of the singer-songwriter craft. In this paper, we propose that, whilst the singers' process in creating a vocal performance on any song (original or cover) could be considered similar in terms of voice production, there are deeper considerations for SSWs and consequently, for the teachers who oversee their voice training.

**KEYWORDS:** *Singer-Songwriter, Singing Voice Pedagogy, Cover Singer.*

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid advances in, and easy access to digital technologies have created an environment where anyone can act as a singer-songwriter (SSW), writing, recording, and circulating their own compositions to the world. We could find no empirical research that offered contextual, background information about people who seek singing voice training in contemporary commercial music (CCM) generally, and only one that mentioned SSWs as a discrete group within the CCM genre (Chalfin, 2017). Importantly for this paper, some authors have highlighted this lacuna in the literature; for example, Marc and Green (2016), "the singer-songwriter has received scant academic

attention" (p. 20) and, Williams and William's (2017), "while observing the vast quantity of artists engaging with singer-songwriter practises we identified a pedagogical desire [but] a shortage of texts that dealt with the figure of the singer-songwriter" (p. 1). As industry insiders with extensive experience in both CCM performance and studio teaching, the authors of this paper have observed SSWs and the diversity of their voice production needs as different from our teaching interactions with *cover singers* (please see Glossary for a detailed definition of the term, p. 6). In our view, these differences can change the face of a standard singing voice lesson significantly.

## ADDRESSING THE DIFFERENCES

Padgett (2017) offered the interesting observation that by meeting a public audience demand for live versions of their original recordings in concert performances, recording artists could be seen as creating cover versions of their own songs. Given an individual singer's personal, artistic interpretations, it is commonly understood that the primary aim of the cover singer is to perform a song according to set parameters of style and voice production elements as exhibited by the original artist (Godin, 2020; Bartlett, 2011; Bartlett in Hoch, 2019). Reporting on CCM in modern musical theatre productions, Edwards and Hoch (2019) offer a similar view: "it is sometimes desirable to hire a singer that can mimic another performer ... shows need performers who can imitate the vocal quality of the original artists." (p. 187).

In meeting the style-related elements of the cover singing, teachers have ready access to clear reference guides with relation to the inherent elements of voice production and vocal effects; that

is, they are able to refer to recordings where they can analyse the technical and stylistic elements that are used by the original artist in the performance of a song. This knowledge of music (rhythm and form), style-related voice production, effects and embellishment allows the teacher to guide a relevant technical approach to repertoire as required by individual students (Naismith, 2019), thereby assisting the cover singer in their aspiration to emulate the signature elements of the music, along with the idiosyncratic vocal effects of the recording artist.

In contrast, SSWs present in lessons with music that is self-composed and where the lyrics of the songs are often intrinsically linked to deep personal connections; that is, the SSWs' own emotion-based experiences (Appel, 2017). The challenge for teachers of SSWs is to ensure that their students are aware of the need to protect their voice whilst remaining mindful of the personal, emotion-centred nature of singing a self-composed song. Our interest was piqued by Simos' (2017) statement, "the combining of the art of poetic words ... composing or improvising music; ... strikes many admirers — and practitioners — as somehow beyond pedagogy" (p. 17). Chalfin (2017) supports this proposition suggesting that, "Singers [SSWs] will often limit themselves in terms of their technique by approaching singing as an unnatural act" (p. 142). He suggests that this group of CCM singers might resist (knowingly or unknowingly) any work that they perceive as changing their self-identified sound, or that challenges their sense of personal authenticity [the perception of the song playing in their heads]. In their article discussing singers in modern musical theatre productions, Edwards and Hoch (2019) clearly highlight similar pedagogical challenges:

The voice teachers who work with solo artists must focus on the tastes and desires of the performer in front of them. They must find functional pathways to protecting vocal health while maintaining the artist's unique timbre ... With solo artists, there are no limits - creating new and unusual sounds can often be the ticket to success. (p. 188)

## THE LITERATURE AND SINGER SONGWRITERS

There is a growing body of literature discussing the SSW's craft in relation to culture, history, and social impact (e.g., Hawkins, 2000; Holman Jackson, 2007; Jones, 2007; Lankford Jr, 2010; Potter & Sorrell, 2012; Reynolds, 2009; Whiteley, 2000; William & Williams, 2016; William &

Williams, 2017; Zollo, 1958, Zollo, 2016). We found also, some elucidating discussions surrounding the craft, creativity, and contribution of SSWs to their art form which were written from the perspectives of musicology (Cohen, Gudmundsdottir, Beynon, & Ludke, 2010, 2011 2012, 2020; Till, 2016). In terms of doctoral theses, one emic researcher focused on ways in which literary and linguistic prosody inform song writing (Bishop, 2021); two others focused on creative triggers, creative intent, creative choices and how SSWs' songs were originated (Scholtes, 2015; Stewart, 2019). However, we could find no research which offered specific information around voice training for SSWs.

### Singer-songwriters

Broadly, the literature of the field defines *singer-songwriter* as a movement in music history with reference to 1960s singer-songwriters such as Bob Dylan, Laura Nyro, Nick Drake, Leonard Cohen, Janice Ian, Tim Buckley, Joni Mitchell and James Taylor, proposing that it might also refer to folk music style, or simply anyone who writes and performs their own songs (Appel, 2017; Lankford Jr, 2010).

Hawkins (2000) helped to further define the architecture of SSW song creation by suggesting a model of the creative elements of song comprising typically of four structural sections: (i) music and (ii) lyrics, (iii) self-accompaniment and (iv) singing. He refers to the combination of these four elements as being "attributed to one dominant unified imagination" that distinguishes the SSW from other popular music categories in which each of those roles is commonly assigned to different people (Hawkins, 2000, p. 32). In our emic view of the CCM world, the roles of composer, lyricist, producer, arranger, musician, and singer may comprise one person, one for each role, or as Hawkins (2000) suggested, "one dominant unified imagination" (p. 32); that is, a collection of people filling the one or several rolls. For example, the artistic collaboration format is apparent in credits for the song *Arthur's Theme*"; the credits read, "Words and Music by Christopher Cross, Burt Bacharach, Carole Bayer Sager and Peter Allen", while Christopher Cross was also the singer on the hit recording (Musicnotes, 2016). Similarly, Lennon and McCartney often took on a variety of roles while creating their songs — composer/producer or composer/lyricist — yet did not always contribute equally to each role on every song in their composition library (Kreps, 2015).

From our experience of working with SSWs, it is not uncommon for a single person to act in all roles as they create a song/performance (composer, lyricist, arranger and singer). This is evidenced in the work of famous singer-songwriters such as Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell and James Taylor who accompanied themselves on guitar or piano while singing their self-composed songs.

### The “singer” in the singer-songwriter trilogy

We found it interesting that, although the word *singer* is prominent in the descriptor singer-songwriter, many authors in the CCM literature, while focusing their work on the history and craft of the SSW (Holman Jones, 2007; Jackson, 2007; Potter & Sorrell, 2012; Reynolds, 2009; Webb, 1998; Zollo, 1958, Zollo, 2016), do not discuss any technical elements of singing voice production or the vocal approach taken by the SSW when performing a self-composed song. Where the singer is mentioned, discussion often takes the form of metaphoric description (e.g., Holman Jones, 2007; Potter & Sorrell, 2012; Reynolds, 2009). In the field of voice pedagogy, researchers offer their readers approaches to technique and style. While many are clearly focused on classical voice (e.g., Chapman, 2012; Marchesi, Miller & Philip, 1970; Miller, 1996; Vennard, 1967), others do include work for CCM singers (George & Vertigan, 2001; LoVetri, 2003; Leborgne & Rosenberg, 2014; Peckham, 2000; Shewell, 2009; Hands, 2009); however, none address the needs of SSWs as a discrete group within the CCM genre.

Chalfin (2017) was the only author we could find who highlighted the lacuna in the literature with respect to SSWs as a discrete group within the CCM genre. He pointed out that little or no discussion has been given to the degree of thought or attention that SSWs might give to their singing in terms of personal, artistic intentions or, indeed, to their vocal ability. He pointed to a common assumption that, “if you have written the song, you know exactly what every word is about” and that “song interpretation is best left for approaching covers” (p. 138). He also raised issues of SSWs’ mindsets and specific stagecraft training-needs, “the very personal nature of the performing experience can lead to an introverted and sometimes even self-indulgent performance that can alienate the audience without the singer even realising it”, and “it’s all about the music, not putting on a show ..., they [SSWs] sometimes feel that if they’re too outwardly emotive or showy they are somehow selling out or diminishing their authenticity” (p. 137).

### The etic/emic narrative

From our review of the existing literature, it became apparent that many reports had been written from an etic perspective: that is, by someone other than SSWs themselves (e.g., Hawkins, 2000; Holman Jones, 2007; Jackson, 2007; Lankford Jr, 2010; Potter & Sorrell, 2012; Reynolds, 2009; Whiteley, 2000; William & Williams, 2016; William & Williams, 2017; Zollo, 1958, Zollo, 2016). Emic reports are few in number (e.g., Jones, 2017; King, 2012; Scholtes, 2015; Watson, 2017; Stewart, 2019) with commentary centred generally around the crafting of the song; there was little discussion that focused on SSWs’ attitude towards the act of singing their own original music. In our opinion, to date the most significant discussion written from an emic perspective is that of Stewart (2019) around her interviews with 18 participants who self-identified as SSWs, and 2 producers. This doctoral thesis investigated the role “the voice play in the creative process of song writing and in the songs that emerge” given “the component of singing in the craft of the singer-songwriter is rarely defined or described in the literature” (p. 3).

Author One claims her own emic view of the field through her extensive and successful career (over 35 years) as a practicing SSW and her parallel career as a singing voice teacher in tertiary and private studio settings. As an SSW she identifies as composer, lyricist, arranger, *and* singer with a strong emphasis on singing as the vehicle for her passionate, artistic expression. To facilitate a personal need for in-depth analysis of her own singing of her original songs, she enrolled in a master’s degree program. To explore the role of the singer in the SSW trinity, an auto-ethnographic approach was employed to investigate the formulation of Author One’s own singing performance as a distinct process beyond the elements of music composer and lyricist. The words of vocal pedagogue Richard Miller resonated with her as she considered the complexities of the singer as a primary actor in her SSW’s craft: “How does the artistic imagination make use of technical skill to communicate beautiful sound and emotion” (Miller, 1996, p. 9). In particular, the concept of artistic imagination somehow interconnecting with technical skill to mysteriously produce beautiful emotional singing guided her consideration of the unique, intrinsic relationship of the psyche and the vocal instrument (Hands, 2009) as it related to herself and to other SSWs.

## METHOD, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The original scoping project was designed to investigate the vocal craft of SSWs via two means: (1) an auto-ethnographic journaling of Author One's song writing process with a focus on the singer component of the trinity. And, to further ground her thinking, (2) the journaling of her reflections on short informal discussions conducted with four of her private studio SSW students at the conclusion of their lessons. The results from thematic coding of collected data produced a profile of a professional SSW constructed through documentation of Author One's lived experiences of singing her original compositions, supported by relevant data collected in her interactions with her four SSW students. The quality and depth of the data derived from the journalised conversations were found to be directly related to her own experiences in relation to the significance of the singer in the singer-songwriter trinity.

These and other findings from the scoping project produced valuable knowledge/insights into the mindset of SSW singing their own songs, thereby prompting an expansion of the scoping study into a Doctor of Musical Arts research investigation. In this paper, Author One and her supervisor (Author Two) present some findings from the scoping research project aligned with initial trends from the first stage of the current DMA research — interviews with a group of professional SSWs around their reflections on the singing component of their SSW craft. Pre-project research and the scoping investigation informed the architecture of the current DMA research. Griffith University Human Ethics clearance was applied for, granted, and is current at the time of writing this paper.

### THE DMA RESEARCH PROJECT

THE methodological framework for the current study is qualitative and based in hermeneutic phenomenology (HP) — an interpretive methodology for studying a person's life experience. HP methods provide a nuanced understanding of the nature or *essence* of human experience in relation to phenomena.

In the ongoing doctoral research, data are being collected through three stages — Stage 1: individual semi-structured interviews with all participants; Stage 2: observations of all participants in a 'live' performance; Stage 3: a focus group involving all participants to address the primary research question: How do SSWs

formulate their vocal performance on original compositions?

The transition from the scoping project (Master's degree) to a DMA allowed a further expansion of existing theoretical and structural frameworks to include case studies of seven professional SSWs. HP interviewing method allowed Author One to engage in a dialogic cycle of questioning and reflection; an exchange between researcher and participant that required the researcher to be *reflexive* throughout all stages (Spencer, Richie, Lewis & Dillon, 2003). Interview questions were designed to elicit participants' perceptions of feelings, thoughts, opinions & behaviours (often in relation to sensory perceptions of phenomenon).

The earlier scoping study had provided a profile of Author One as an SSW. The following is an excerpt from the summary section of her auto-ethnographic research journal which highlights the impact the study had on Author One's understanding of her SSW approach to the singing of her own original songs:

As I flip through the colourful, musical score riddled pages of this research journal, I am strongly impressed with the number of things I did not know about myself when I started this project [...] As a lifelong singer-songwriter, I suppose I took the act of being a singer-songwriter for granted. Not in an arrogant way, but simply because delving into the world of the singer-songwriter means to delve into the right hemisphere of your brain as if you were the starship enterprise. I honestly didn't know where I was heading or where I would end up.

And this from her current DMA journal:

I was writing to create a compositional artwork that was interesting and really distinctive ... then [I'd pass it] to me as the singer and then [I'd try] to sing this thing, there was times that I couldn't, and I have listened to those recordings, and I just go 'oh my god what was I thinking?' ... Again, I didn't think about the technique of the voice, I just knew that my voice needed to portray the story convincingly so when I ... rehearsed them, I would rehearse them the way an actor would rehearse [sic] and I would make sure that the story was really convincing. I didn't really think about technique as far as voice was concerned, I just thought about whether I was getting the story across.

These statements highlight that throughout her life-long SSW journey, Author One had not fully considered the prominence of the singer component

of her SSW craft; that is, how she would sing her own songs.

It is evident that assumptions exist in the literature (e.g., Simo, 2017, p. 21) that SSWs write primarily for their own singing voice. However, it appears that many elements appear to define an SSW's approach to a vocal performance. Preliminary analysis of data collected in Stage 2 of the current DMA research project (the individual semi-structured interviews with six professional SSWs) suggests that participants were oblivious to how they approached a vocal performance (creatively and technically) on a self-composed song. This lack of consideration was not deliberate; as one participant said, "I'm not sure if I consciously know 'yes, this is how I'm going to deliver ... on my originals,'" while another said:

I don't know if the approach [to singing originals] or the headset evolved all that much, but the knowledge underneath it maybe, was what evolved. So, I got better at it, but it was always with the same joyful, totally exposed, 'happy to fail approach' that had happened since day one.

When the SSW participants were asked if they write for their vocal capabilities, more than half stated they did not. For example, "I vocalised as I composed but I was not writing for my voice, [or] my capabilities. I was not writing in a vocal style [or] to emulate some singer." Another participant stated that he does not compromise the melody of a composition to make it fit his voice,

I've written a song but for some reason the melody lines are coming to me in a girl's voice. ... Rarely do I ever change a melody because it's too high for me, ... generally, I try not to compromise the melody. If there's something that I just can't sing, I'll usually give it to somebody else.

At this early stage of analysis, there is reasonable cause to doubt a common assumption that, at the outset, SSWs write songs to fit their voice.

Participants' reflections on questions around the singing component of their SSW craft suggest that the compositional moment is integral to defining an SSW's vocal approach to an original song. For example, in response to a question - Is vocalising during the composition of an original song integral to the compositional process and the setting of your vocal performance or approach? - more than half of the SSW participants stated that their voice was, by some degree, integral to the compositional process. One SSW explained it this way, "my voice, ... was the composer, as opposed to my mind, or hands."

The majority of participants spoke in some way about the effect of their "singer" in relation to

that of their "composer." For example, one participant raised vocal health considerations as she described her posture at the moment of the composition process and the possible impact on subsequent performances of that song. In the creative, compositional moment, this SSW's focus was to give voice to her thoughts and feelings rather than on voice production technique and vocal health in singing performance. She reflected on her poor physical alignment, poor breath flow and support in the compositional moment as possibly relating to her current experience of voice health issues which were now affecting her professional performances.

This participant's reflection is in keeping with Chalfin's (2017) observations, "We have all seen a singer-songwriter sitting down behind a piano or with a guitar, hunching over and affectively playing to themselves. [Whilst] there may be moments of a song where this extreme introversion is emotionally appropriate, ... Sadly, many performers mistake this posture for credibility" (p. 143).

For longevity in any singing style or genre, singers require a healthy, sustainable singing voice and this is dependent on practised, applied technique. One participant discussed their experience addressing technical issues that had arisen from stylistic choices with no strategy other than repeating the troublesome section of the song: "there's one tune I did that had a sort of belting element to it, so I had to sort of go over that a few times over the process of recording to get it in a healthy way."

All participants made statements concerning the importance of emotion, story, love, authenticity, genuineness, and truth in the message being conveyed. One participant stated, "I want the timbre [of my voice] to portray a story or feeling or emotion". Another said, "with my songs ... I don't think I think about what role it's playing [referring to the voice], other than it'll be the story." In terms of technique one participant had this to say, "I personally think that if you're engaging on that emotional level and telling a story, all the technical things will fall into place, and all the choices that you can make ... I think if you focus on the story and the emotion all those things fall into their rightful place. You don't have to plan so much."

Preliminary analysis of collected data has revealed an emergent theme of interest centred on *signature sound* or *vocal persona* (see Glossary p.6 for definitions). One participant stated that, during performance, "it's just about trying to tell the story and [shaping] it as you feel it". This comment speaks to the SSWs concept of authenticity, truth and vulnerability and preliminary indications are

that for SSWs these are somehow linked. Shuker (2017) spoke to authenticity as a factor, “the concept of the singer-songwriter continues to have strong connotations of greater *authenticity* and ‘true’ *auteurship*” (as cited in Appel, 2017, p. 7). Shuker’s view is consistent with other reports in the literature that the SSWs’ artistic practice must contain personal authenticity and intimacy (Covach & Flory, 2012; Shumway, 2012). SSWs may believe that their signature sound is partially the reason they achieve any level of commercial success.

## CONCLUSIONS

As researchers continue to work towards an established pedagogical model for training CCM singers (Chalfin, 2017; LoVetri, as cited in White, 2017; LeBorgne, & Rosenberg, 2014; Naismith, 2019), it is hoped that the specific needs of SSWs as a group will be considered and included.

While the existing literature provides context, definition, and clarity around the SSW craft generally, in terms of pedagogical assistance, we found limited practice-based research and only one author (Chalfin, 2017) who spoke specifically about the need for informing knowledge for teachers working with SSWs.

As educators and teachers of singing voice, we have been particularly interested to understand the role of the ‘singer’ within the SSW craft with reference to current advances in pedagogical practice and the specific training needs of our SSW singing voice students. Findings from data collected via Author One’s initial scoping project indicated that SSWs have similar yet different voice production needs to other CCM students of singing voice and that these differences can change the face of a lesson significantly. Similarly, in preliminary analysis of collected data from Stage 2 of the current doctoral research project, preliminary findings suggest that, from the point of composition through to the moment of performance, ‘the singer’ component of their craft is integral to participants’ creative output. This view aligns with a recent qualitative study where Stewart (2019) commented, “The artist’s speaking and singing voice is used to link *the self* and *the field self* during contexts and processes of creativity.” (p.179). She goes on to highlight a crucial point in our argument, “The singing voice may be managed and mediated by others during these processes, which can affect *the self* and the *artistic realisations [of SSWs]*.” (Stewart, 2019, p.179). This statement supports our view of a need for teachers to have a considered

pedagogical approach as they *manage and mediate* SSWs’ vocal performance of their original songs

In supporting SSWs’ innate desire for an authentic vocal sound (emotion-driven tone qualities and vocal effects), teachers can be better equipped to communicate the benefits of appropriate technique and vocal health management if they are aware of the complex personal and intimate nature of an SSW’s voice production (including performance persona and the vulnerability inherent in telling their own stories).

We leave the final comment to Pete Astor (2018):

Or, as Tom Waits once memorably said, 'Songs are funny that way. You take off your hat and all these birds fly out of your head' (Flanagan 1990, p. 393). As songwriters and educators, understanding those birds is what we need to do (p. 305).

## LIMITATIONS

The current study has some limitations particularly in regard to the small number of participants (N=7) and a possible personal bias of Author One as both practitioner and researcher in the field. In reflecting on the impact of personal bias, which can be defined as “any tendency which prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question” (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010, para 3), Author One carefully controlled her dual role status and data collection habits to ensure that no outcome or answer was given preference over others (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010). In terms of contribution to the field, the hermeneutic method will arguably produce meaningful findings based in—*emic* experience that may inspire and guide larger *emic* studies in the future.

## Glossary

- signature sound
- vocal persona
- cover version or cover singer

The term *signature sound* is used in literature and describes a singer’s idiosyncratic vocal production (cf. Baur, 2020; Francis, 2020; Morgan, 2020). As a descriptor it refers to the fact that some singers’ voices are so distinctive, they are recognisable via auditory means only. It is important to note that this term may be used in other sectors of the music industry and in those contexts, possesses alternative meanings. In this paper we use the term in the context of CCM.

*Vocal persona* is a term used in literature that discusses CCM singers and describes a singer's idiosyncratic vocal sound, but more specifically refers to the inherent character of a person manifested through the sound of their voice (Holman Jones, 2007; Potter & Sorrell, 2012; Reynolds, 2009).

*Cover version* or *cover singer* are terms used widely in the English-speaking sphere to describe a performance "of a popular song by a performer or performers other than those responsible for the original version. It can be a recreation of the original or a radical reworking" (Latham, 2011, para.1).

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## BIOGRAPHY

**Laine Loxlea-Danann** is an award winning academic and has enjoyed a success national and international career for the last 32 years. Laine, a vocal pedagogue, theatre maker, internationally performed musical playwright, screenwriter, singer and performer, has attained a Master of Music Studies from the Queensland Conservatorium and is currently completing her Doctor of Musical Arts. Her performance credits include musical theatre, straight theatre, film, television, concerts and cabarets. As a composer Laine has had the privilege of writing six short-film scores, two of which won Queensland New Film Makers Awards and won a Woodford Film Festival Award. She has been a singing teacher at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University is currently the Head of Voice at the Brisbane Academy of Musical Theatre / Harvest Rain.

**Dr. Irene Bartlett's** teaching centres on the development of healthy, sustainable singing technique and performance longevity for singers of all styles. Currently, as the Coordinator of Contemporary Voice and Head of Vocal Pedagogy and Jazz/Contemporary Voice at Griffith University, Irene develops curriculum and delivers training for undergraduate and postgraduate singers and for teachers of singing. Recognized internationally as a leader in the field of contemporary commercial music (CCM) styles and voice pedagogy, Irene presents public workshops and speaker/keynote presentations at national and international conferences and symposia. She is a past Master Teacher for the Australian National Association of Teachers of Singing and a visiting lecturer to national and international higher education institutions.

Irene's present and past students have successful careers in the contemporary commercial music industry (inclusive of Jazz, Pop, Rock, Country, R&B and all associated sub-styles) as well as nationally touring Musical Theatre productions. Many of these working professionals are recipients of prestigious industry and academic awards including: multiple ARIA awards, three

Bell Awards (Best Jazz Album), the National Jazz Award, multiple James Morrison 'Generations in Jazz' Scholarships, Churchill Fellowships, The Marten Bequest Travelling Scholarship, and the Dame Joan Sutherland Fund.

As both an independent artist and featured vocalist in small combo, big band and cabaret, Irene's extensive performance career has informed her ongoing research. She is the author of numerous book chapters, and journal articles and is a contributor to seminal texts in singing voice and music education publications.