

INTRODUCTION

Tales From the Trenches

If you find that you're auditioning, but not winning roles, or that you're not consistently performing at your personal best in audition or competition situations, you may just need the proper tools to develop auditioning skills.

Don't worry! Help is here, now. You're not alone in your dilemma. In fact, one of the most sought after sopranos in the world today confides that she experienced a period in the early days of her career when she couldn't get hired to save her life! Renée Fleming writes about it candidly in her autobiography, *The Inner Voice, The Making of a Singer*, 2004.

"For all the progress I had made with my voice and with languages, style, and musicianship over the years, I had advanced very little in my auditioning skills. I was fine on the stage once the part was mine and I could concentrate on working out its nuances, but in auditions I inevitably felt insecure." Renée Fleming (p. 75, The Inner Voice)

Who would have imagined that this accomplished soprano and international superstar, had to overcome huge hurdles to achieve the worldwide acclaim she now enjoys. And she is not unique.

By now, you've heard many tell their own audition or performance meltdown horror stories. Maybe you've even experienced a few of your own and have lived to talk about it. There are myriad reasons why an audition can go really wrong. Here are just a few:

There's the "Doom Room" – Audition spaces with low ceilings, thick carpet, curtains, or upholstery, small and void of reverb that swallow up so much of your sound that you feel as if you're singing into a pillow.

The "Waiting Game" – The big cool down after you've warmed up and waited an hour past your allotted audition time.

"Of Human Bondage" - You've been cooped up so long that you're now dying of hunger or thirst and there's not a water fountain or snack in sight.

"Grand Central Station" – Your fellow colleagues are coming and going, talking your ear off and you can no longer concentrate.

"Psst...Over Here" - The auditors are seemingly so engrossed in conversation (or their sandwiches!) they couldn't possibly be listening to you. Or maybe they're discussing that high B-flat that just got away from you?

My personal favorite happened when I auditioned for Claudio Abbado, then music director of the Berlin Philharmonic. I arrived a full half hour before my scheduled singing time, but was immediately pushed onto the stage of the Berlin Philharmonic Hall still wearing my coat, gloves and ear muffs because the singer scheduled before me hadn't shown up. No waiting game, cool down or other such situation, but these were still somehow not exactly the ideal circumstances for singing such an important audition!

You know what I'm talking about and you know why I call it the "trenches". You're out there fighting for your performing life, improvising under volatile conditions over which you often have no control.

Or do you?

Battle Plans

Did you know that the most important element in any battle is the PLAN?

You might be thinking: "Of course! Everyone knows that you have to plan." But I've been amazed to discover the big difference between the *planning techniques* used by successful auditioners, as compared to those that the less successful ones use.

Maria Callas gave a now infamous series of master classes at The Julliard School in 1971. She is quoted as saying: "*There are only three things one needs to make a career as a singer: concentration, technique and courage.*"

In my experience, she was right on the money. But what does it take to be able to call on these things at will, at the exact moment that you need them most? Again, the answer is - a plan. You need to have devised and internalized an effective plan of action.

What are now reading is a step -by- step, day by day **blueprint** to developing and incorporating into your practice, all of the elements needed for successful auditioning. Actually, these elements must be present for successful performance of any kind.

Imagine the excitement of building a plan of action that will take you from where you are right now, and help you to develop into a more seasoned, powerful performer in as little as 30 days?

With *Nail Your Next Audition*, you will do just that!