

What Performing in 53 Countries Taught Me About the Human Voice

By Mark Janicello

Recently, an article about my work appeared under the headline "*The Man Who's Sung in 53 Countries Is Now Teaching in London.*" It made me reflect on an extraordinary journey that has taken me from the streets of New York to opera houses, theatres, concert halls, television studios, and performance venues across 53 countries.

Over the course of more than 35 years, I've sung leading roles in opera and operetta, performed musical theatre, recorded dozens of albums, portrayed Elvis Presley on major European stages, appeared in film and television projects, and worked with artists from virtually every corner of the entertainment industry.

People often ask what performing around the world has taught me about singing.

My answer surprises them.

The most important thing I've learned isn't about music.

It's about people.

Every Voice Tells a Story

The voice is unlike any other instrument.

A pianist can sit down at a piano and play a note. A violinist can draw a bow across a string. But singers carry their instrument within themselves.

The voice reflects our confidence, our fears, our experiences, our habits, and even our beliefs about what we're capable of achieving.

Throughout my career, I've worked with extraordinary performers. Some possessed naturally gifted voices. Others succeeded through determination, discipline, and intelligent training.

What they all shared was a willingness to tell their story.

Whether I was singing opera in Europe, performing contemporary music in Asia, or appearing on stage in North America, audiences responded to authenticity more than perfection.

The singers who connected most deeply were those who allowed themselves to be fully present.

Talent Is Overrated. Training Is Not.

One of the greatest misconceptions about singing is the belief that people are either born with talent or they're not.

After hearing thousands of voices over the years, I simply don't believe that's true.

Of course, some people begin with natural advantages. But natural ability only takes a singer so far.

What consistently creates success is good technique, healthy vocal habits, disciplined practice, and effective coaching.

Many of my students arrive convinced that they "can't sing."

Within weeks or months, they begin achieving things they never thought possible.

That's not magic.

It's the result of understanding how the voice actually works.

As one student recently wrote:

"Mark is an exceptional vocal coach who creates a supportive and encouraging environment where students can truly flourish. His guidance helped me unlock capabilities in my voice that I never knew existed."

Experiences like that remind me why I teach.

Confidence Is a Vocal Skill

When people think about singing lessons, they often imagine scales, breathing exercises, and vocal technique.

Those things matter.

But confidence matters just as much.

I've performed before audiences ranging from a few dozen people to several thousand. I've appeared in countries where I spoke the language fluently and others where I could barely order a cup of coffee.

No matter where I performed, one challenge remained constant:

Learning to trust myself.

The same challenge faces many singers.

Some students are terrified of auditions. Others struggle with public speaking, performance anxiety, or simply allowing themselves to be heard.

A significant part of vocal coaching involves helping people develop the confidence to express themselves freely.

Technical improvement and personal confidence often grow together.

As students begin hearing positive changes in their voices, they begin seeing themselves differently as well.

There Is No Such Thing as One "Correct" Voice

Another lesson I learned while performing internationally is that great singing comes in many forms.

I've worked with opera singers, musical theatre performers, pop artists, gospel singers, jazz musicians, actors, and public speakers.

The best performers didn't all sound alike.

In fact, their individuality was often their greatest strength.

One of the most rewarding aspects of teaching is helping students discover their own authentic sound rather than trying to imitate someone else's.

The goal isn't to create another Elvis Presley, Luciano Pavarotti, Freddie Mercury, or Barbra Streisand.

The goal is to help each student become the strongest version of themselves.

That's why I tailor every lesson to the individual sitting in front of me.

Every voice is unique.

Every student is unique.

Their training should be unique as well.

The Best Teachers Never Stop Learning

My performing career has taken me across five continents, but I continue to learn something new about the voice every year.

Every student teaches me something.

Every coaching session offers new insights.

The human voice is endlessly fascinating because it exists at the intersection of physiology, psychology, communication, and art.

The more experience I gain, the more I appreciate that effective teaching isn't about showing students how much I know.

It's about helping them discover what they can do.

One testimonial on my website describes my teaching as helping singers find "their authentic voice."

I couldn't ask for a better description.

Because that's ultimately what great vocal training should accomplish.

Why I Chose to Teach in London

After decades of performing internationally, people sometimes ask why I decided to establish a vocal coaching studio in London.

The answer is simple.

Teaching allows me to share everything I've learned from a lifetime in the performing arts.

My students benefit not only from vocal exercises and technical instruction but also from real-world experience gained through thousands of performances, hundreds of productions, recording sessions, auditions, rehearsals, and professional engagements around the world.

Whether you're a complete beginner, an experienced performer, a musical theatre enthusiast, a professional singer, or someone who simply loves music, the principles remain the same:

Healthy technique.

Efficient breathing.

Authentic communication.

Confidence.

And a belief that growth is always possible.

The Human Voice Is Stronger Than We Think

If performing in 53 countries has taught me anything, it's that human beings are capable of far more than they imagine.

I've seen shy people become confident performers.

I've seen adults discover singing later in life.

I've seen students overcome years of self-doubt.

I've seen voices blossom when given the right guidance, encouragement, and training.

The human voice is incredibly resilient.

It can grow stronger, richer, freer, and more expressive at almost any stage of life.

That's why I continue to teach.

Because after more than 35 years as a professional performer, I still find tremendous joy in helping someone discover what their voice can truly do.

And in many cases, that discovery changes far more than the way they sing.

It changes the way they see themselves.

About Mark Janicello

Mark Janicello is an award-winning American tenor, actor, recording artist, playwright, and vocal coach based in London. His international performing career spans more than 35 years and 53 countries, encompassing opera, musical theatre, concerts, recording, television, film, and live performance. He offers private singing lessons in Earl's Court, West London, and online vocal coaching for students worldwide.