

Well-being journal

12.1.2018

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

I felt quite relaxed about the whole situation. I knew the piece quite well and enjoyed the music.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

The (vice)conductor was really friendly and firm and it made singing easy.

The language coach made me feel that I can master the phonetics.

My choir coach had a really nice, high-ringing voice that made fine-tuning and blending easy.

3. Which were not?

The piece was really challenging in many ways, especially vocally.

I had to sing in my "Bermuda triangle" for a long time in a slow tempo and with lots of consonants.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

+ relaxation

+ enjoyment of the music

+ mastery

+ good communication with the conductor

+ blending with other voices

- repertoire being too difficult vocally

- tessitura of the piece being not ideal all the time

14.1.2018

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

I was really tired after the weekend. The rehearsal was only 3 hours, which was good and I was able to concentrate despite of my tiredness.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

The conductor made some really good choices with breathing and tempo which made singing easier.

Getting familiar with the music brought security.

3. Which were not?

My own physical state, being really tired.

Difficulties with the phonetics: especially the Russian h.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

+ concentration

+ security

- + good contact with the conductor
- tiredness of the body
- difficulties in producing the right sounds for the language

15.1.2018

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

I really got to enjoy the great music. Singing felt easy and I was able to do different things with my voice.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

Fine-tuned chords that rang in the rehearsal space made me feel really good.

My own ability of singing in tune (and fine-tune my singing) made me feel good about my skills.

The music had really interesting harmonies that made me happy.

3. Which were not?

Nothing

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + enjoyment of the music
- + singing with ease
- + vocal diversity
- + well-tuned chords
- + feeling that my skills matched the requirements

16.1.2018

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

I felt that I might be catching a cold and was really tired in my body. I was not able to sustain good technique and the rehearsal was mostly about survival.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

I knew the music well enough to survive even though I was feeling quite poor.

3. Which were not?

My own health

Tiredness in the body

My own thoughts about not doing well enough because of my physical state

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + being confident about knowing the music
- illness
- tiredness
- judgemental thoughts about myself

18.1.2018

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

This was the last rehearsal before the general. We didn't sing the general, which felt a bit boring. It's very nice to rehearse with the NKK, but it would be even nicer to be able to perform as well!

2. Which things were good for well-being?

I felt I was mastering the music.

Technically challenging parts were becoming more possible for me to sing in a sustainable way.

Even though I felt a bit ill, I noticed the my body could support me and I could sing despite of the cold.

I really enjoyed the level of singing and music-making.

3. Which were not?

Knowledge of not having to perform - in a way practicing starts to feel a bit pointless, because you would want to share the music with an audience.

Having to sing a bit carefully because of the cold.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

+ mastery

+ singing hard music with ease

+ body connection

+ high artistic quality

- feelings of pointlessness

- holding back

11.3.2019

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

I was really nervous to sing the repertoire: very modern music, some of it composed for this project only.

I had been really busy with other projects, so my preparation time was limited and that made me feel insecure.

The biggest feeling was relief when I realised I was able to keep up with the rehearsal anyway.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

The general atmosphere in the rehearsals was friendly and relaxed.

My coach was supportive and showed me that it's ok to make mistakes (sing wrong notes etc) and learn from them.

The music was easy from a singing technique point of view which made it possible to focus on reading and that made me feel more confident.

3. Which were not?

Some of the sheet music was really bad (hand-written, A3, with difficult Dutch text in small letters) and it made me make more mistakes and that was really frustrating.

The music was written for 16 singers and I was an extra “stagiair” so my singing was actually disturbing the balance. This was due to the fact that nobody had really considered if this project is good for extra stagiair singers or not. It made me feel self-conscious and I felt the need of diminishing my singing, which also affected my technique.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + relief
- + relaxed working environment
- + support from other singers
- + technical ease
- repertoire not being to own liking
- feelings of pointlessness
- feelings of being on the way of the artistic result
- nervousness
- insecurity
- frustration because of the working environment

12.3.2019

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

It was a lot easier than the day before because most of the nervousness was gone.

I was able to make more music now when the repertoire was more familiar.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

We decided to take “Warum ist das Licht gegeben...” by Brahms to the repertoire. Singing it felt like coming home and I was really enjoying the music.

One of the modern pieces (Letter to Michael) had a really touching story behind it. Hearing it made singing feel much more connected to emotions and I started liking the music more.

3. Which were not?

Some of the repertoire was taken out and I regretted spending time and effort to practice it. I felt that the planning of the project was not good.

Halfway to the rehearsals it was announced that they would start stage rehearsals, which meant that we stagiairs could not sing anymore. This was not made clear before. We felt again in the way and pointless.

It also become really clear that we wouldn't be singing any concerts, which made rehearsing again feel a bit pointless.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + self-confidence
- + being able to focus on making music
- + repertoire was to my liking
- + finding emotional connection with the music and the text
- poor planning

- feelings of working for nothing
- being in the way

13.3.2019

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

We had a short musical rehearsal where we could be singing along, which felt good and singing was easy.

Soon the choir continued the stage rehearsals and we stagiairs didn't really have a place in this rehearsal, which brought up feelings of frustration and even boredom.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

I felt quite at ease with the music, partly because I knew I didn't have to perform it. In a weird way that took the pressure away and I found it easier to sing atonal music for example.

3. Which were not?

Again the planning was not great and it made us feel useless.

Singing in an unbalanced choir (16 voices + us 3 extra for random parts) makes it hard to blend and take initiative, because in a way you're not supposed to be there.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + ease of singing
- + freedom to sing without fearing mistakes
- + mastering difficult music
- frustration
- being in the way
- not having a place in the music, being "extra"
- boredom

29.3.2019

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

The rehearsal had only 4 people to sing St Matthew Passion, so it felt kind of uncomplete.

However, I enjoyed the music a lot since it's one of my favourite pieces of music.

I tried to sing a solo that I had been really nervous of (Erbarme dich) and it went well. I felt like I overcame my fears and made a really big step forward.

I was able to use my voice in a generous way since there were so few people. It made singing feel really easy.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

The conductor was really enthusiastic and I caught the feeling too.

I was able to use my full voice in the rehearsal.

I knew most of the music really well and felt that I was mastering it.

I was able to overcome my fear of singing Erbarme dich.

I got really good feedback from the conductor and colleagues.

3. Which were not?

It was not completely clear what I was supposed to sing and which parts of the piece were going to be in the concert, so planning was a bit poor in this project.

It was difficult to sing 8/9-part music with 4 singers.

I had done poorly with my warm-up (read: I didn't warm up) so my voice was a bit rough in the beginning.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + repertoire was my favourite
- + overcoming a fear of a piece
- + mastering a difficult piece
- + being able to use full voice
- + being able to support long phrases easily
- + enthusiasm from the conductor and colleagues
- + good feedback and social support
- + knowing the music really well
- confusion about parts due to poor planning
- stupid mistakes because of having to sing a new part suddenly
- poor warm-up
- amount of singers was not ideal

7.4.2019

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the rehearsals

The rehearsal was very rushed, because we only had one hour before the concert started. I felt like I was in a hurry and we were not able to sing all the parts with all the singers.

The conductor didn't want to go through some things that we hadn't sung at all, so that meant I would be singing prima vista on stage.

The church was with good acoustics, but the organ had a weird delay which made singing a bit hard in the arias.

I handled my solo (the dreaded Erbarme dich) quite well and felt happy about it.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

Beautiful weather and natural light in the church made the atmosphere really warm and inviting.

The organist was really making an effort to make singing easy for us.

The acoustics were really good.

3. Which were not?

I felt really rushed due to the tight schedule.

We didn't rehearse the difficult parts.

Half of the singers joined only for this rehearsal and it was a bit hard to suddenly sing with new people who had different musical ideas.

I had the wrong sheet music for some pieces which didn't have all the repetitions and some note lengths were incorrect which stressed me out.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + mastering a difficult solo
- + great acoustics
- + nice atmosphere for a concert
- + accompanist was really paying attention and working with the singers
- feeling rushed
- not having enough time to rehearse difficult things
- not having enough time to rehearse with new people
- knowing that I have to sight-read on stage in the concert
- delay in organs
- insufficient sheet music

7.4.2019 concert

1. General comments about feelings and experiences in the concert

I felt a bit given up on things, because I felt rushed and uncertain after the rehearsals.

There was a lot of audience which made me nervous and happy at the same time.

I couldn't focus on making music all the time because I was so busy with reading the music.

I was happy with the duet and my aria.

2. Which things were good for well-being?

Singing to a big audience made me motivated.

I really loved the music.

There was a nice atmosphere in the church.

I was able to sing the difficult aria.

I could trust my singing partner in the duet.

3. Which were not?

I was too busy with the sheet music and reading to sing the right notes.

I sometimes felt that I was not able to trust the conductor.

In a way I did not care that much about the "result" or how the concert would go - I think this was a defence mechanism because of the stress from the unclear and tight-scheduled rehearsals.

I was a bit too worried about my aria and was really nervous in my body before it.

4. What kind of experiences did I have?

- + nice audience
- + loving the music
- + good atmosphere in the concert
- + mastering a hard solo
- + feeling good about singing together in the duet
- + trusting the other person musically
- nervousness/performance anxiety
- losing motivation
- not trusting the other person musically (conductor)

- feeling giving up/not caring
- not being able to focus on making music

May 2019

We were not allowed to sing in rehearsals at all. We only listened for 4 days, which was both interesting but also really frustrating at times. Only listening didn't really give me any kinds of well-being experiences. At times I wondered that the song they were singing sounded interesting, but that's all.