

12 Choral Maxims

maxim | 'maksim|
noun

a short, pithy statement expressing a general truth or rule of conduct: *the maxim that actions speak louder than words.*

1. Soft, sincere singing is the key to great singing
2. Your tone should be a mix of 30% me and 70% us
3. Sing as loud as your section can sing beautifully
4. Choirs are judged by how wonderful and unified the soprano section performs
5. Basses must crescendo as they descend watching descending 3^{rds}, 6^{ths} and 7^{ths}
6. Define, stretch and sustain the best vowel in each word
7. Expressive singing done in a collective manner can solve serious problems
8. If you can hear your own distinct tone quality, you are not blending with others
9. Altos please sing louder with a velvety, unified sound
10. If you don't look up for three consecutive measures, you are not listening to others
11. The end of a phrase is the last sound the listener hears and should go completely unnoticed
12. Choruses that breathe together achieve together (Prepare each sound with the proper breath)

As I read these maxims, I realize that many of these “rules of conduct” are the result of my working with, singing under, and studying with the best in our business. Many thanks to my mentors, teachers and singers!!!

Richard Zielinski, 2010