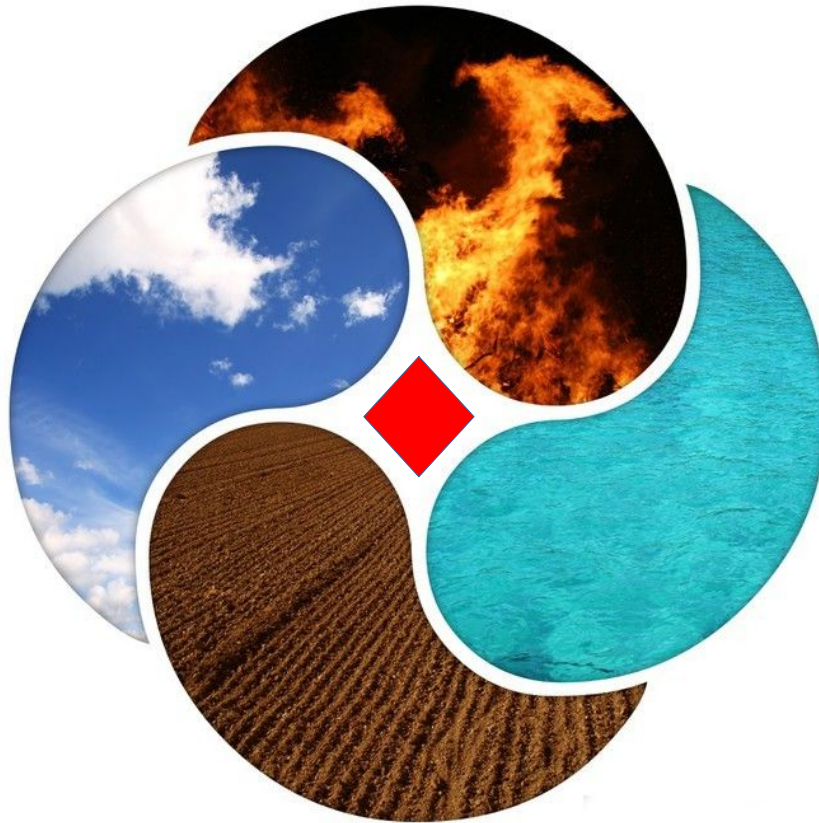


**Master project
Matthias Held
Royal Academy of Music, Aalborg
Innovative Choir/Vocal Leadership**

„The 4 elements of choir singing“



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Introduction

„The 4 elements of choir singing“

This is a project - and a process. Not a finished one but a documented status on a stage of the process.

In how far it's generally applicable or marketable - I can only suggest. Or better: Throw a sketch light on.

All I can do is present experiments and state that choirs find these challenging, funny (in sense of joy), activating or useful. Some strike nerves that have hardly been struck before. Some make singers act where they used to think – or think about how they should act. Some leave them free to just try things, „do“ things, feel and listen.

Yet, if you put the pieces together, you'll get the endeavour for wholeness of all choir singing has to give, for all we need to purchase this wholeness, for groove, for fun, to some degree for performance.

This, for choirs as a social group with a more-or-less fixed personnel over a certain period of time¹, is a long-term process. I would be glad if project choirs - relatively short-term - caught a glimpse of all this. (**see Target groups**)

How did this process start?

I started singing - though not necessarily on stage – when I was young.

Music always had something elementary to me which you could not just listen to, but move to, perform, breathe, feel - in a word: Live.

Subconsciously, some songs felt different than others, categorize a Rock song differently than a Classical tune, Jazz, Folk or Ambient music.

It was much later that I connected this with outward messages. (The „stage performance“ side). But moving to the music, even miming instruments while singing, there were several different ways of connecting the body.

What I remember most significantly about the 4 elements in my youth was reading about „Wish you were here“ (Pink Floyd) who used a picture of four elements in a circle as a circular **wholeness** symbol for nature, the balance of man and in an astrological sense; one element connected to each zodiac and reflecting on people's character. (Pink Floyd being a quartet with all four elements included, coming to think of it, their musical flow included every element audible as well. Think of Rock guitar sounds as in „Sheep“, water sounds and painting pictures of a submarine world like „Echoes“, a pulsing bass like „One of these days“ and spheric keyboards which enriched „The division bell“)

I started my conservatory studies of Jazz&Pop Singing (Diploma also for education) in 2002, finishing in 2006. All I learned in technical and pedagogical terms of singing and voice training back then, I filled up technical with some Functional Voice Technique elements and – more - CVT over the years. (**see ANNEX document**)

Four basic functions of the voice joined by effects and support (breath) occurred very much to me.

Yet, being a performing and choir singer as well, EVTS and CVT to my mind both lacked some things:

Use of the body, only being described as muscular support, use of balance, use of facial expression, gesture and performance.

So, there was a **core** described: All articulators and components of the singing voice, how to use them for every sound possible, in a healthy and economic way.

But near to no connection to movements, feelings and interpretation.

It was then that the 4 elements symbol came back to me, not only since there was something missing in my opinion and sensation („There is something else that makes the tune complete - it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that Swing.“) to give the singer's voice a sense of wholeness.

I felt a voice in use should have something rooting it something feeding it, something flowing and something outward, and a singer should learn to be in control of all of it.

And this is how I started thinking the „system“ „from bottom to top“. Or: From downward to forward. (You'll see this in the **MOVEMENT** section.)

What I found in the beginning of my studies in Aalborg was the agreement on the curriculum's **four basic focus areas** or **vocal ensemble singers' tools**:²

RHYTHM/GROOVE	PITCH/INTONATION	SOUND/BLEND	EXPRESSION
Physical awareness:	Tonal awareness:	Blending or un-blending of voices	Lyrics:
Internal pulse reference	Voice technique		Interpretation
External pulse reference	Inner hearing of notes and intervals	Vowel colours	Intuitive and conscious text phrasing
Pulse-subdivision relations		Voice timbres	Notes expression:
Downbeat-upbeat-preparation	Note and phrase preparation		Articulation
	Sense of harmony		Inflections
Groove:			Vibrato
Accents and feeling			Breathiness
variable tempo			Other voice noise
rubato			Phrase shapes in attitude:
			Dynamics
			Intuitive creation of musical curves
			„I dare you“ -factor
			„musical language“
			distance to listener
Rhythm Pre-Exercises	Harmony pre-exercises	Floor-Roof Games	Story
Step	Theory understanding	Singing Technique	Phrasing
Clap	Steps 1-2-3	Shadowing	Dynamics
Energize	Stop on Chords	Listening/Changing	Conducting
Metronome	Floating pitch		Listening/changing
Floating Tempo			Staging

To cut the list short.

Did this read like a frame of mind to build upon already, so was it the more inspired by the instructions:

- One use one focus point at a time
- Create new connections between each other
- Use this map to create something of your own for your choir

Following Peder Karlsson's „Introduction to Leadership in Choirs and Vocal Groups“,³ defines among long-term and short-term **goals for a choir** a balance between BODY WORK, FEELINGS, WILLPOWER and THINKING. Means: See how you can use your body, your heart, your mind and your will (call it energy of the soul or determination?) to do the best for your choir.

Again, here is the **foursome**. Now, instead of earning remarks like: „Oh no, that's too much to think about. So much structure. Where's the fun?“, let's not sing the „Foursome Prison Blues“.⁴ Let's see how choir singers can use all this and hopefully have fun all the same.*

To have fun singing – like children do⁵ - is natural. What is natural to our voice, where can we start? And what do we find in nature?

* In the further description of the process; every time I write „I“, I take the perspective of the choir leader. I might as well say „You“ or „one“, meaning that every interested choir leader can take this perspective while reading.

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The 4 elements of choir singing



EARTH

Earth keeps us grounded. Earth keeps our balance because of gravity. Earth holds the roots of a tree and allows it to grow. Earth is solid.

To connect to the earth, we need to ground ourselves, feel the gravity, be aware of our standing. We can feel our roots then, feel our solidness, feel ourselves loosen again, for every tension needs releasing. Which is most significant in our muscles.

And we can imagine growing like a tree, roots, branches and twigs.

All this origins from our body.

Where is the solidness in music? Music, talking about rhythmic music, requires structure. Beginning with **time**, meter and **rhythm**. Measures form phrases, which form parts like Verse and Chorus, which form songs.

It's most natural to transfer the solidness into our body by feeling the rhythm. Make the time physical without just counting. **Stamp, use steps, use claps**, make use of **body percussion or instrumentalize your voice with drum sounds, vocal percussion or energizing syllables**.

And: we can grow from **bottom to top** by building rhythm **from bigger units** (whole notes, half notes, fourths) **to subdivisions**, dividing the rhythm like a tree divides into branches and twigs. Another bottom-to-top - or floor-to-roof – challenge would be to let the tempo grow or slow down. All regarding our solid ground.

EARTH = Grounding – standing – posture – body work – tension vs. release – time – rhythm – pulse reference – subdivision feel - steps – claps - body and vocal percussion - tempo



AIR

Air surrounds us. It's the part of our atmosphere we can feel directly. It can be hot or cool, humid or arid, moved by all kinds of wind, from breeze to hurricane, or not be moved at all,

but it's always there.

We could not live without oxygen, so it's most natural to inhale and exhale, to whatever capable degree. In and out, soft or strong. And the air carries the sounds we produce and

hear. We're not able to fly on our own, but we can succumb – if only for fun – to what the wind does to us, take the air in, stand against the wind with arms open or let the breeze play with our hair.

What is the air that keeps music alive? We – using our voices - must **breathe** to sing, **in and out**, most likely with more **focus** than we normally do, to **control the airstream**.

Supported by our muscles, we check **how much** we breathe in, **in what time**, and how much we breathe out, in what time.

A **rhythm** in our mind – and in our body – can be **transformed to breathing exercises**, which adds to **vocal percussion**, and can just as easily be **voiced** (humming, sirening), and can be turned into **pure sounds** with little effort.

Delve into feeling the sounds, **resonating**, controlling it, **vibrating**, with one ear open to **catch the sound** of your fellow singers, of a leading person, of an instrument. Also to check yourself, of course.

Listen to how much air it takes you to **start a sound** (aspirated or not?) or to **end it** (fade or cut-off).

And enjoy letting sounds **grow bigger**, like a storm, **or smaller**, like a whisper. How **dynamic** can you be using your airstream?

AIR = Breathing - breath control – airstream – breathing rhythm – humming – sirening – producing sound – resonance – vibrato – onset – starting – endings - dynamics



WATER

Water is inside and around us. Not only to a great deal in our body, but also covering the earth to a great deal. Water nurtures the earth and makes it fertile. It makes us survive.

Water exists in various shapes and sizes, though the formability is limited between ice and vapour. It can be a drop, a stream, a river, an ocean, a fountain, geyser or waterfall. Water is not only connected to roundness, like a drop, a circle drawn by a dropping stone, a puddle, a glass, a bowl, a lake or a pebble rounded by constant washing. Water is circular by nature; from falling rain to a stream to a river to the ocean, rising up, floating and falling down again.

And it is highly flexible, always finding its way. Last but not least, it's in constant flow.

What flows through the music we make? Once you create a tone, there is the urge to create another one – if you wish – and more, to **start a melody**. Then you **define your sound**: What **vowel** is it you use to carry it? Now and then **limited by consonants**, because the shape and size of water is defined by its limits. Imagine earthy consonants pushing the **rhythm**, aided by airy, spirant sounds, **nurtured by vowels**.

A **melody needs to flow**, with one tone after another. Be it **high or low**. Limited by lengths of tones, as water passes highs and lows in the ground. Sounds need to **blend** into one another, be **bigger or smaller**, the more you **open or close** them.

And: From all you hear and produce, there will be **words** involving. Words that form **lyrics**. Only **clear, flowing** lyrics can be understood the way we want it.

Goes to show: Our personal balance between freeing the sound and controlling it

WATER = Sound – colour of sound (technical) – vowels – definition – melody – melodic flow - pitch - range - blending - openness – articulation – pronunciation – lyrics



FIRE

What would life on earth be without fire? Fire heats the earth from within. Fire can heat the water and the air. The sun is our eternal source of daylight and growth. And natural fire always - beside all destructive powers - has the power to keep us warm. A single spark can start a fire. Every ray of sun is enlightening and heartening.

Fire, even a flame, is some kind of power. A spark – literally spoken – can spawn ideas, emotions, inspiration to develop into something, however great it may be.

And we do connect what we feel with some degree of heat. Rising anger like something boiling, love like something warm to our hearts, loneliness with cold etc.

It seems like something we need to control, whether to keep it (burning?) or not. If it is possible within our limits, why not try?

So: What keeps our music burning? You can produce pure rhythm, but for real music it **needs to live**. You can produce sounds, but either soft or loud, it sounds empty without **energy** and **intention**. A colour of sound can be **bright or dark**, but it requires **imagination** to nurture it. You can sing words, but they sound empty without a **heartfelt, soulful message**. Our **hearts**, our **personal grade of emotion**, need to be **in the music**.

Can you sing about **love** if you never felt it? If you did, **associate** and **memorize** the feeling. The same goes for anger, aggression, shyness, fear etc.

If even one vowel, be it „aah“ or „eeh“, is familiar to you combined with an emotion - ring your bell and **sing** this **emotion**. It will brighten or darken the sound the way you need it. **Use dynamics** to the degree they **carry your feelings** about what you sing.

As for rhythm: Transport the attitude in the way you use your body and energize. Boom!

FIRE = Energy – intention – colour of sound (emotional) – imagination – heart – soul – expression - message - emotion - association – outward feelings – applied dynamics - interpretation

What can a choir create from the 4 elements?

Take a look back at the element circle on page 1.
Earth supports the Air - Air kindles the Fire – Fire heats the Water – Water nurtures the Earth
It's just natural that elements combine and interact.
We'll get to that.

Reading the list of terms connected with each element, you might miss a few. I'll explain them here.

Groove -

is something musicians/singers create together by involving their body into their music. The singer is his/her own instrument. Stand, feel the beat, comprehend the downbeats, fill-up the subdivisions, use vocal percussion – feed with it the rhythm of what you're singing and enrichen the sound.
Groove is a common EARTH experience, supporting all other three elements.

Harmony -

Several singers together create harmony by: Being aware of the melody they sing, even single long notes. Harmonizing melodies, be it written or instructed or improvised. Being aware of their functions in a chord. Listening to each other. Linking polyphonic melody lines.
Harmony is a common WATER experience, open-minded, receiving and flowing

Improvisation -

is both of the latter, intuitively or with leadership plus instructions, like VOPA.⁶ Finding a groove together, getting into it and living it; creating melodies and building up harmonies all the same. Besides all listening to each other this takes, it requires a common „ether“, because every thing you start has to be supported and fed by all that's happening around.

So: A common AIR experience - you might say, if you fill yourself up and create things „out of the blue“.

Kucheza⁷ -

is an interesting term feeding improvised vocal music. It's Suaheli and means „**play**“ in the sense of „**acting**“, like an actor – or musician – does on stage. So, it is referred to not just standing and singing, but acting out the music, by grooving, dancing, really expressing the lyrics, interpreting – anything you can imagine. Capture the association of children you will get with the word „play“.⁸ It's natural to explore, to play and use the things that are there in the moment. If you keep a child's attitude to music, you will let go a bit of thinking, cognition and reason, use more of your body and your emotion.

Sounds like a common FIRE experience, supported by the other three elements. But there's more to it.

Performance:

You will notice that I also placed at diamond in the middle of my element circle (page 1).

From the **annex file** – chapter: EARTH WISDOM – you will have noticed that there is a **diamond** in the centre of the 4-element-circle. In Peder Karlsson's „Introduction to Leadership in choirs and vocal groups“, there is a diamond painted inside a graphic of a „circle of balance“ marked by BODY – WILLPOWER – FEELING – THINKING. (The corners pointing towards those four.) Inside the „Organic choir“ symbol – a ring of coloured circles – there is a light shining.

The „shining-diamond-thing“ which makes a choir unique, is something it can create out of all 4 elements: **Performance. You could call this „the 5th element“.** **It is the core and the outward light of choir music.**

Expressing feelings (facial and musical) is one thing. A singer can do this perfectly on his/her own. Now imagine a big stage with 30-40 or more singers expressing the same emotion alike. How much more power is in that to overcome the stage and fill the room?

Singing a melody in perfect tune - with lyrics or without – is one thing. A singer on his/her own can do this to great acclaim, so everyone can understand him/her. How much clearer would the message be if 30-40 singers or more do the same, even in harmony, adding layers of sound and frequency?

Starting a tone, ending a tone, getting louder and softer is one thing. A single singer can express the control over his/her voice impressively, carry the tone and make it clear. How greater the effect if a choir of 30-40 or more singers starts those waves and let them roll over the audience?

Connecting the music to the body, moving and grooving – is one thing. Even if a single singer does this and is really „in“ the music: Imagine 30-40 or more singers moving and grooving simultaneously to and „in“ the music – the greater the groove and joy that will be transported to the audience.

Theories of group dynamics say, forefronted by Kurt Lewin, that a group is more than the sum of its individual parts.⁹ Multiplying the strength of all that choir singers can do on all 4 elements, I would agree. Even more so, as each singer should have his own way of „being in the song“ and interpreting it. All singers together, if they share a common goal, can put this on top. And the audience will feel it.¹⁰

Structure/Examples

I have come across a lot of exercises over the years, of course.

To mark how a choir could include every element into a rehearsal or combine two elements as helpful tools, I listed 10 exercises plus one pre-exercise for body-warm-up. (see **ANNEX, Practise and exercises, for details and intention**)

Here they are in short, with approximate times:

BODY PRE-EXERCISE (warming up, stretching, loosening, balance tension and release),	5 min
1. EARTH - 3-layer body groove	1 ½ - 2 min
2. AIR - activate breath in 8 steps	max. 3 min
3. EARTH & AIR - breathe the rhythm of a song	5 - 7 min
4. WATER - tone to scale, play with the melody in a defined range	3 – 4 min
5. EARTH & WATER - Call&Response with subdivisions and body groove	2 – 4 min
6. AIR & WATER - explore dynamic range 1-10	3 min
7. FIRE - Emotion chart – confront the audience	2 min
8. FIRE & EARTH - overextend a rhythmic part	5 – 7 min
9. FIRE & WATER - Open for harmony	5 – 6 min
10. AIR & FIRE - Walk the line, no matter how	7 – 8 min

+ BODY PRE-EXERCISE EXTENDED

TREE IMAGINATION

„WAKE UP YOUR ELEMENTS“

These are only examples, they can be varied and elaborated.

The times change due to how much explanation or preparation an exercise needs. If it's already familiar, it depends on how intensely you dig into a song. But it can be reduced to maximum 5 minutes of precise work each. And you *could* take a piece of each and place them throughout a rehearsal, according to the songs you sing.

I assumed an **average 2-hour rehearsal** for the following schedule. (see **HOW TO BUILD A REHEARSAL**) You can easily extend it to three hours¹¹, if you add one more song or give a song more thought.

By the way: Here are some issues I would add on to a presentation of this concept in public – on refining a song.

Implementing „elemental“ thoughts and approaches on a known piece

Of course, you should apply the following points on a **new piece** as well. My experience with choirs who sang songs before I took the lead, or whom I coached, was that it's always good to check on what deal of attention they gave to the „elements“ of those. And hopefully give some guiding input. So:

Message

Though I link WATER to spoken lyrics and FIRE to interpretation, there is another way to the **message** of a song, because: Not every singer will something in every lyric to automatically „set him/her on fire“. There might be different approaches to the song, different things that „stir up“ something. I tried to roughly classify this in **4 question sets** from singer to song:

QUESTION SET 1:

Is this song about an emotion you experienced – maybe just recently?
Does it contain the word „fire“ (- which is most likely related)?

Answer: Yes = This is a **FIRE** message
Answer: No = Proceed to QUESTION SET 2

QUESTION SET 2:

Is this song about a memory, something similar to your past maybe?
Does it look back on something that helped the lyricist grow
(and the interpreter makes it sound believable)?

Answer: Yes = Here we have an **EARTH** message
Answer: No = Proceed to QUESTION SET 3

QUESTION SET 3:

Is this song about a wish, a hope, a dream, a fantasy, maybe once you had, too?
Does it contain images of „air“, „clouds“, „sky“ or „flying“?

Answer: Yes = Here we have an **AIR** message
Answer: No = Proceed to QUESTION SET 4

QUESTION SET 4:

Is this song about a mystical theme, spiritual or images of nature?
Or are the lyrics simply phonetically funny or challenging to sing?
(Even that can be mystical)

Answer: Yes = Here we have a **WATER** message

Answer: Oh wait, I think it's two times YES until now! = Check the lyrics on where which is to find !

Imagery and intention

Interpreting a song always should start with an intention. Choir leader and choir should ask themselves: What do you want to do? What do you want to give the audience? This is the **spark** which starts it all. (FIRE)
First of all you, as a choir leader, should take the time to **explain the topic** and image of the song to the choir. If you play the song, explain the structure as well. (EARTH)
Then make them think: What is the intention? What does this song mean to you? What will be most life-giving about it?

And next, maybe with a breathing exercise (AIR), relaxing and eyes closed, (FIRE) **try to feel** if we can relate to it. Go inside. (WATER)

Images of nature, for instance, should always arouse a positive connotation.

Just one example: Imagine you're singing about **snow**. What is your connection to snow? Try to imagine snow falling on your face, walking through snow, leaving footprints, dancing, throwing snowballs, dancing, sense it, enjoy the quietness, Feel the connection to draw your intention to snow.

What is the sense in complaining about snow, ice, slippery streets, traffic jams, wetness and chaos, coming to a choir rehearsal and singing a happy song about snow?

Current feelings should be treated carefully. You should always ask choir members to step back from imagining if they probably could get so angry that they're unable to concentrate, or get on the verge of tears.

Connections to **wishes and dreams** should allow the singers to have enough free space around them. If you announce: „You may dance or stretch out your arms or sth.“, they should. Rather than feel limited in any way, because some may be reluctant enough to let themselves go, though it is a pity.

Then later, if we have worked on a part of the song, the choir can try to sing it with emotion = carry and outward the connection we made before. (FIRE)

Rhythm/Groove

Do we find that a song tends to „run away“ or fall out of tempo?

Well, what IS the tempo? Is there a playback or a fixed tempo in the sheet or a metronome reference?

If this is so, we may together - leader and choir – walk the tempo with a simple Basic step (0 = on the spot, 1 = Right forth, left tap, right back, left tap, 2 = right – close – left – close, 3 = right – close – left – close in 2/2 Feel, 4 = Basic Step 3 on offbeats)¹² We'll not only find what is the step most suitable for the style; we'll also be able to reduce the rushing because we lift and lower our feet consciously, and feel the lifts between the steps=beats, filling up the rhythm.

If this is established, we might try the same with hand gestures like conducting, also lifting our arms consciously in between. Or – next – add subdivisions with side claps or tapping fingers. From here the choir can proceed to „energizing“ the actual lyrics, and to singing. Now is high time to check if we have a better grasp of the tempo. (**ANNEX file, Practice/exercises 1, 3, 5, 8**)

Should there be NO tempo written down – well, we can find it together along the same way and adjust it if the choir finds it too fast or too slow. A song is organically known to have its ideal tempo – although you can play with it.

Movement (in addition or preparation for Performance)

- see Exercise „Wake up your elements“ (**ANNEX file, Practice/exercises**)

I name **four basic directions** of moving on stage - next to expression and posture – according to the character of each element.

EARTH	Down	Basic step 0, bend your knees, stamp, bow, look down, duck, cross arms, point and gesture down, lower arms	Energy level: medium & quick
AIR	Up	Jump, raise arms, look up, point up left and right & turn to the point, stretch	Energy level: medium, changing slowly
WATER	Inward or Circular	Step back, back away, inward gestures, turn on the spot, fold, „become smaller“, form circles or half-circles	Energy level: rather low, changing slowly
FIRE	Forward	Basic step 1, point forward, arms forward, walk forward, lean, open arms, attack, open position	Energy level: high & quick

Reduce the upper three to posture, expression and gestures, **if you may**. According to the song, the groove and the message. Keep the intensity but adjust the moving level.

Push the intensity of communication with the audience with the fourth - it's towards the audience and out of your comfort zone.

Link it all by moving left, right, forward or coming back to centre → turn it into **Performance**.

HOW TO BUILD A REHEARSAL

As I said: Average two hours. (see ANNEX, Practise and exercises, for details and intention)

This is only one possible model of many, but I experienced this as a balanced, satisfactory structure.

!! For the back of your mind: Be flexible with the structure. Don't leave something unfinished and unsatisfying if possible – rather shorten the following units.

1. 5-10 Minutes WARM-UP

- Body-Pre-Exercise or extended version (EARTH)
- Alternative in 2-hour units of bigger workshops or with familiar groups: TREE EXERCISE
- Exercise „Wake up your elements“ - especially for spirit-orientated groups, lower levels or a short overall experience.

2. WARM UP your voices 10 Minutes +

- Exercise 1 (EARTH) - for ambitious groups or challenge or rhythm preparation
- or Exercise 2 (AIR) or parts of it - depending on what you chose before
!! Include the support, right muscular groups
- Sirening → on to forming vowels → over 5th or octave range
Balance between opening and closing, include jaw and basic vocal mode¹³ sensations (we pick one characteristic vowel for each mode; Neutral, Curbing, Overdrive and Edge, with brighter or darker sound.) - !! watch larynx tension and correct extreme lifts or lowering
- Melodic exercise - like Exercise 4 → vary vowels and Vocal modes (WATER) → vary syllables (WATER) → vary dynamics (AIR) → vary the tempo (EARTH) → express emotion within sounds (FIRE)
Choose how many parameters you use and when
- Maybe extra: Exercise 5 to train reaction, creativity and hearing
!! Warm up the high tones of the choir anyway but with fun
!! Stay in the flow

3. SING ONE SONG THROUGH 5 Minutes

5 Minutes max. Feedback and maybe give a clue

- Positive feedback: What was nice?
- What drew your attention and could be better?
- Where could we have stopped to check something?
- if needed: Sing the song again with **1 or 2 special focus points** -
- e.g. there was a lack of energy: Recall the starting dynamic level we had, recall the maximum, recall the message and start again with the proper expression (AIR & EARTH)

Alternative: SING A LOOP SONG 10 Minutes max. if it's new and has to be taught

- You may also put this at the end of the rehearsal. ;-) Especially if it's familiar.

LOOP SONG examples (see Loop Songs Master Annex)

<https://youtu.be/tSxNNRHyc38?t=461>

Synco-Doodle

<https://youtu.be/mln9tCFylqA?t=886>

Think Black

4. DETAIL WORK ON ONE SONG 30 Minutes max. including Feedback

- New song? Present it first – with intention, message and clear structure for the choir (Spark = FIRE; Song structure = EARTH; Melodic impression = WATER) →
- then set up focus points for the first part of the song

- Already done a part? **Sing it through and remember**
- To which elements did we pay attention last time? Did it work well?
- e.g. Focus points were Melody, Insets and Phrasing (WATER & AIR) → do a **check-up** part by part again, let voices in question (maybe just two sing a certain part together) breathe in, sing and cut-off at the same time
- → other voices listen, for a little feedback and for their cues and links → they join
- spot melodic parts which are unclear and give them the right dose of attention AND emotion to transport the overall feel (WATER & FIRE)

- **sing the part again with a different focus point**, e.g. Groove and subdivisions (EARTH)
- if needed; repeat important issues by C & R - use Exercise 3 (EARTH & AIR) or Exercise 5 (EARTH & WATER) based on the rhythm you need
- **proceed to another part** - what can you use from the previous part? Lyrical or melodic similarities/sequences? (WATER CONNECTION) Do we have a different level of dynamics (AIR) or energy? (FIRE) What is happening? (FIRE) Structure? Do we repeat this part in a way (EARTH)?
- **Check it all over and sing through from the start** if there is time

5. BREAK 10 Minutes -

Short talk on general and personal issues, organisation topics and news

6. DETAIL WORK ON ANOTHER SONG 30 Minutes including Feedback

- **Sing through the known parts and remember**
- To which elements did we pay attention last time? How did they work now?
- !! Best: Start this song from a different angle than the other one.
- e.g. Focus points were Expression and Groove, to a certain degree (FIRE and EARTH) --> switch to a Melodic, Sound or Intonation focus (WATER and AIR) like: What sound does fit to these expressions? Do we have Curbing, Overdrive, Neutral or Edge in the distinct vowels? Listen if you blend these right. Are there melodic differences within a voice?
- otherwise same procedure as with the song before, maybe also proceed to the next part

- If the song is on the way to staging: How does it look right now? What variety of facial expression can we use? (glimpses of Exercise 7 - fit to the situation) What movements could we use? Is the position/set-up okay or could we maybe change it? (Re-group voices or mix) How does it sound? Idea: Split groups to create an audience feel - one half watches and listens. Overextend parts to test expression, groove and energy to a higher degree (Exercise 8)

- If there is time for it: Stress-Test: Exercise 10 for flexibility of the most secure parts

7. SING THROUGH ONE SONG – FINAL 10 Minutes max. including setting/positioning Known piece in concert/performance mode or Loop Song for fun

No feedback - except a positive statement at the end

GOOD-BYE! C U next time!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPTDBeny5gY> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSxNNRHyc38&>

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Reception

How **did** singers respond to „**The 4 elements of choir singing**“?

I enlisted a bunch of feedbacks to my exercises, rehearsals and some coachings or workshops, from several singers. (see **ANNEX, Practise&Exercises**)

For a definition of the target group so far, see **Target Group(s)**.

Some choir singers gave their opinion to every exercise, marking what a choir singer in general, first confronted with „the whole thing“ *might* say, where his/her difficulties lie with new things, and where he/her feels released or opened in a yet unfamiliar way.

What I found out as general essence - or purport – of the element variations was:

BODY EXERCISE:

„It feels nice to leave the day behind coming to the rehearsal, you come to yourself and relax by conscious tension and release.“

After doing this more often, singers reflected: „I didn't know that I could stretch so far. Jumping and loosening feels a lot easier now. And some moves feel like a kind of ritual. I like that.“

EARTH = BODY GROOVE

„All three layers together are difficult. But it wakes up your attention and you just have to switch off thinking“. Later reflection: „We could need more of that, especially before gigs. Our moving together and our sense of tempo have improved.“

AIR = 8 STEPS OF BREATHING

„Interesting to do it on purpose and watch what your muscles do.“

Later reflection: „I do this here and there in my spare time or waiting somewhere. I'm much more conscious of my muscles now, of my torso and shoulders ... it's natural without having to act. My capacity has grown, too.“

EARTH&AIR = BREATHING RHYTHM

„There was a constant level of energy which supported the tone. Once you knew what the breathing was about and you fit the lyrics in, it really had a pulling kind of dynamic.“

Later reflection: „It has grown easier along the way. You approach the lyrics differently. You really get the gist of Energizing, because there is Energy from the start. And it helps you on the rhythm.“

WATER = SCALE, MAJOR OR MINOR

„It's exhausting for Bass singers if you start too high. Minor is more difficult than Major, you need to pay attention.“

Later reflection: „Minor opens the sound more, once you're in it. It broadens your sense of harmony, since you're used to Major. I am less afraid of high tones now. To do this on Call & Response also helps very much, in terms of hearing.“

WATER & EARTH = C&R WITH SUBDIVISIONS

„Really quite difficult to sing and drum at the same time. And to coordinate three things.“

Later reflection:

„It grows easier with more repetitions. (*That's what singers already spotted after the first round*). Put on energizing first like Exercise 1 and then adding melody suited me more. You can even refresh a song with that - or create own melodies to give a call.“

AIR & WATER = DYNAMIC SCALE

„You really need to concentrate, and it's hard to be very soft, but you feel a lot and level 10 is overwhelming.“

Later reflection: „I realize more and more how my voice releases, the space this creates and the fun this is. Less strain and more security of my extremes. Still it's challenging somehow. But maybe we can even extend our loudness.“

FIRE = EMOTION CHART

„It's challenging, but it's funny. You just don't care what others think. We really would need a mirror for that.“

Later reflection: „It’s even more fun if we have an audience or be each other’s audience. Movement makes it more stage-like, that’s cool. You feel more and more group dynamics and togetherness. I wouldn’t have thought we would let go and adapt so quickly.“

EARTH & FIRE = OVEREXTEND RHYTHMICAL PART

„It’s fun, though at first it’s not obvious what it’s for. Everyone, so it seems, did different subdivisions. You first have to have your feet work on their own, then it’s easier.“

Later reflection: „High grade work. We can really pat our shoulders for that, managing all that body percussion. I can hold my tension better now and feel new impulses. Singing improves the process. It’s good to listen to the lead voice and adapt the melody for a change, to get into it. Just as challenging as overextending a part I know by heart.“

WATER & FIRE = OPEN FOR HARMONY

„This is harmonic, it fills the room with harmony. We don’t need to sing loud, energy comes with the openness. The blending turned out nice.“

Later reflection: „We could really make this a ritual or a loop song. We need extensions. Blending and group dynamics even improved. Nice.“

FIRE & AIR = WALK THE LINE

„It strained my face to have high energy and low volume. You really need to mind the energy and not to lose the rhythm.“

Later reflection: „We can pretty well check the dynamics for a song on a gig with that. We pay attention to the leader (what the level is) but we need to better keep the level in mind by ourselves, too. My expression relaxed by doing this more often. How could we get so loud so often and get carried away? Why don’t we get softer automatically? ... Well, I see, we don’t need automatism anyway.“

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These are, I repeat, general opinion summaries. Of course, there were exceptions, but no total repulsion. It was interesting that Exercise 5 and 8 seemed more challenging to the singers, when they knew Exercise 1 and how to lay a proper base for steps and subdivisions.

To a great degree: Everything „new“ and „cross-over“, putting the focus on more than one thing, especially parts of the body, was challenging. Most issues that made individuals come out of their comfort zone were challenging. Those issues „pimping“ the choir sound right away were „nice“ and received with more welcome.

A number of exercises got more understood and better accepted over the time, helped the singers and encouraged them to add own ideas and „micro-elements“ while working on the songs. **(see ANNEX file, Processing through a song)**

Singers who experienced all 10 exercises found useful strings to work on problematic issues in songs, which occurred now and then in the rehearsals from the testing period on. **Exercises 3, 5, 8 and 10 seemed logical steps** to build upon each other; putting on a song the **Groove, Intonation, Expression and Energy/Dynamic Focus in turn**, supplemented by „just throwing known melodic parts in and repeating them“ (Exercise 5).

Unfortunately, I have not been able to work out the Element cycle on a whole concert programme. The reason being that all regular choirs had to prepare rather small gigs and concerts had other focus points. Still; workshops or coachings where I prepared choirs for concerts, proved a thankful ground for polishing one element or the other, spotting what was missing in a song and providing a missing link. For instance A choir on which I specialized performance training said that it had been very helpful to work „in the light of fire“ and refine expression. But it had also been helpful to know what to choose from (EMOTION CHART) **and** leave things out if there was irritation or (still) uncertainty. **(see Annex file: Choir reception)**

People who saw my regular choirs live once or twice over the past months reflected that the expression, performance and aura, but also the sound and the rhythmical base had improved significantly. „It was great fun to see what you put on stage and to see your development.“

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Recent and possible development

Did my concept develop along the way? Yes, it did.

I had some original ideas of structure, which I needed to adapt. For instance; my basic idea of movement for solo singers, e.g. implemented in warming-up-exercises, consisted of **three** directions, **up-down** (like bending knees, stretching arms etc.), **left-right** (like swinging torso, side-stretching arms, kicks) and **circular** (shifting the body balance point clockwise, propelling arms etc.)

Coming across a slightly spiritual and choir-sound-relevant(=harmonic) exercise like „Wake up your elements“, I integrated the **foursome** also in movements. (see: **Structure/Examples – Movement**) *Not talking about steps*, because Basic steps 1-4¹⁴ illustrate the general groove of a song, no matter what the message is about. Yet, Basic step 1 is an energetic forward-matter, Basic step 0 (on the spot) can as well be interpreted as up and down – which could give a balance.

My researches on Earth Wisdom and Vocal River, gave me some new hints on how the Element exercises should be connected and how the balance should be, along with the „human factor“ = empathy, interaction, communication. That, in the beginning of my concept, was too little regarded compared to the technical and „possibility catalogue“ side.

Also in the beginning, I passed the 4 elements on the 3 songs I was scheduling for rehearsal like this:

	Front	Support	Spirit	Secret
POG AON OIDCHE EARRAICH	A Sphere	F Message	W Sounds	E Drone
VINDO	E Groove	W Interpretation	F Attack	A Dynamics
FEUER GEMACHT	F Message	E Groove	A Sphere	W Articulation

But I drew on different focus points as I went along. With each one element as „Front“, „Support“, „Spirit“ or „Secret,“ I was too much into Helmert Woudenberg's concept.¹⁵ (see **Annex File, Researches**)

Why should a choir spare thoughts on which element is „Secret“ or „Spirit“, when the audience will notice all of them? Some of them subconsciously, yes, but we cannot deliberately regard Groove as „Spirit“, essential as it is. Some elements would be stuck to one category too often to allow changes.

With „Feuer gemacht“, the message **was** important all the time, the groove as well, but interpolation, harmony and bass lines, just to give three examples, were also always present. Not to mention the rising energy and „fun“ level.

„Pog Aon Oidche“ had the drone character unfold into a melodic/harmonic sphere with a certain root, and the sphere adds to the message. Structure, pulse and tonality were just as important.

As for „Vindo“, the groove had to be linked with movements, lyrics with articulation and intonation issues came more to the front; so it all linked together.

For this, I decided to put **one** element-connected focus point in front per rehearsal and have up to 3 sub-focus points as supporters, which balance out the elements. (see **Annex File, Processing through a song**) If a sub-focus fell out of line, it could be in front the next time. What I documented is a starting point (stage 1), a second stage based on evaluation of the first and so on.

It became more clear to me, over the time, how different rehearsals are. Just at one point it might occur that e.g. there's no good working on intonation with a certain voice group that day. So the focus point has to change, which may require some extra work ... and so on.

So, how does this influence the concept?

1. You cannot keep a fixed schedule, so be flexible.¹⁶ If a focus point takes more time – necessity of the singers – another may be delayed or put aside
2. If a voice group wished to have more time for something, or this is necessary to adjust the choir sound, I'll try to steer the process and go on.
3. If the choir as a whole does not feel good with sth., I would check the communication between the voices, the internal status quo and reflect. Maybe here: Split the choir in two and let one half be the audience,

which also helps performance character.

4. In case of technical problems, I'll try to help with some voice training aspects (e.g. CVT, what mode are we in, how can we get it better, more secure and healthier in detail?)
5. Always try to add some expression and interpretation work. Not only HOW do we sing this way now but WHY? What do the lyrics tell us? What does the openness do? Which vowels carry the energy? Which dynamic? Is there still support?

All these regulations helped to sharpen the original concept, because it was quite theoretic AND every choir needs to work on their own elemental „mix“, they each got their own requirements. That takes time; and in choirs I do not work with regularly, we need to access the elements faster in comparison, and strive for quicker short-team success.

As for my regular choirs; I could watch the process of getting familiar with each other, even taking care of each other more over the time.¹⁷ Which adds an important piece to the puzzle of growing together.

Problem settings and problem definitions

The bigger the choir, the more difficult it gets; getting familiar with each other, growing together, finding the right sound and blending, expressional direction and group, because a voice group within itself needs longer to coordinate.

Preparedness, shared experience and open-mindedness help. This deals with **choir intelligence**, because the will to engage, to prepare, to help each other and adapt the input you get from the choir leader requires mental and emotional intelligence. „Doing one's thing“, otherwise insist on „singing just for fun“, otherwise „doing what one is told“ will not help the choir grow.

But: From whom can you expect that intelligence?

- More professional singers may have grown too much into their style and tend to overinterpret certain items, „go through the roof“ or may tend to think too much, with lots of learning schemes and technique on their minds.
- > My method of steering against would be: Elemental basics, just move, just feel, just sing, just do C&R on the spot (with just little „intention“ at first.)
- Less professional singers may be unsure of their voice possibilities, clumsy, insecure or rhythmically „trip over their own feet“, find things difficult to coordinate.
- The elements here need to impart some basic things, give security, strengthen the group. Let the choir experience how nice it is to be coordinated, even in small steps, and leave them hungry for more.

Smaller groups may find it easier to listen to each other, yet perhaps to use more room for their egos. You can distinguish individual voices but have to cut back on general choir sound.

→ rather listen to the individuals first as a leader (what they give), then amalgamate the sound

Bigger groups have bigger choir sound; the desire for homogeneity, blending, adjustment to get a choir sound is greater

→ rather work on the choir sound first, then listen again for individual voices in need of adjustment

Should there be age restrictions in terms of movements, steps, etc. - be flexible. Do not pass the same fixed setting on every choir. (Which I did not want to do at all.)

So; did I experience restrictions so far?

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Target group(s)

In the past 12 months, I taught my exercises and parts of the whole concept „The 4 elements of choir singing“ - plus explaining the general idea -

- to my 3 regular choirs,
- one professional group of 18 singers,
- a small amateur group of 7
- and at a number of workshops and coachings to „external choirs“; (2 Gospel, 3 Pop, the others Pop/Jazz/Mixed Repertoire)
- one of those coachings held 70 participants of two choirs,
- one of them 70 participants of several choirs (Traditional, Classical, Gospel and Pop)

My first thought about whom I would recommend „The 4 elements of choir singing“ to was:

All kinds of choirs and ensembles, every size, who are not absolutely homogenous.

Or say: A traditional church or folk choir with a stylistic tradition of singing („schola“-principle) and repertoire, in German tradition I would think of „Thomaner“ or „Regensburger Domspatzen“. Those kinds of choirs I would only advise to check the message, the deeper lyrical content or the micro-rhythmical aspects, which do not necessarily origin from the conductor, but from the singers themselves. (see **GROOVE**). I would not pass the whole concept to them.

The more the repertoire of the choir allows imagery and imagination (mind pictures) or to play with groove, the more they can delve into the concept as such.

And: The more you could put up their singing „from head to feet“ (or „from top to bottom“), as I think it needs to stand on solid ground (grounding!) from the start.

This is the first task, to my mind, meeting a **new** choir. (Be it in a workshop or taking over a choir regularly from a certain point of time on.)

A choir more conscious of their groove you can advise in details of voice technique, possibilities of sound or of „playing“ with a song, once its basic structure and framework is ready.

If the choir knows how to approach that framework, the better it is.

Then you can have an eye (and ear) on individual issues of the singers. Once the pure „learning“ process for the song is done. If you're not that lucky to know every single singer personally, his/her strength, weaknesses and possibilities of his/her voice - this would be great of course to achieve. It's gonna take some time. (see also **PERSPECTIVE AND OUTLOOKS**)

Meanwhile, you should advise the singers regularly to train their hearing „inside the group“, listen to each other (AIR) in terms of onset, openness, blending etc,

communicate (FIRE) with the voicemates – one ear – and the choir as a whole – the other ear.

But also the flow and letting yourself go in the music (WATER) is a regular point to focus, so it helps the inner security of singers grow, to emancipate from sheet music and mind schemes.

Last but not least; walking, developing steps, energizing or more or less overextending rhythmical parts (EARTH) is to be rekindled from time to time.

Preferably, I would define the target group of „The 4 elements of choir singing“ - to my mind – like this:

All kinds of choirs and ensembles, every size, every age, every level,
who sing rhythmical music
or want to find a deeper impact of classical & traditional music.

Perspective and outlooks

Based on this target group consideration, I am going to

- tend to **first** collect more exercises in the „element“ scheme and work out the existing exercises with all extensions
- then establish the concept with an understandable, printed hand-out,
- parallel to this: start to offer **open coachings** about „The 4 elements“, the more intense once the concept is more established,
- maybe – on basis of a steady rehearsal location – also offer **project choirs** (over maximum 3 months) a package including Voice Training, Groove Training and chosen repertoire with adapted Performance training.
- Already I am offering a **special „Element“ section to choirs who book me**
- or **include this unit in whole-day-coachings.**

I am convinced and I could imagine that „**The 4 elements of choir singing**“ will help a lot of singers re-discover the relation to nature and a more natural way of singing, of the music they can create by themselves. To find that body groove is something natural which relates to the music.

To find that breathing has power from high to low

and you need points of control, of „passage“ to let the rest go.

To find that melodies flow, sound can take all kinds of shapes and harmonies create a deep sphere.

To find that emotion is essential to singing, to connect to lyrics;

and that the heart and soul of a piece lead you back to the body to sum it up.

Preconditions for the singers would be to accept the depth of the pictures, the imagery, their own possible sound, their own improvisational „craft“ and enjoy all of this.

I would not be TOO functional, even if it is important to know which tone of voice group so-and-so has which function in which chord at the very moment.

Even if I can explain, to both groups and individual singers, which articulators their need to form a sound or a Vocal Mode, how they can work on their Twang etc.

Short sojourns into theory are always advisable, as long as you get back to the core of ENJOYING THE SOUND.

My perspective is supposed to be holistic. My wish is to give choirs the whole puzzle. (To, finally and hopefully, puzzle their audience.)

I discovered through my researches that

the more „natural“ the access of people is to nature, be it through their origins, their traditions, their culture - the closer is their connection to the elements. Just to give one example; being familiar with Afro-American or Traditional African culture does a great deal to enhance the „natural cord“ in the web. But also Scandinavian nations are more aware of the power of nature and elements than I was used to, not at least strengthened by non-overcivilized nature; mountains, forests, islands, rivers, the sea. The „Element“ motive occurred a lot in Scandinavian choir music these recent years. The „Elements“ album by The Real Group¹⁸, for instance, most notably „Water“ and „Nature boy“, reveals not only a natural connection but also organic, caring and respectful creation processes.

I found a **German example** of putting the 4 elements into a concert setting, too. The Southern-German choir „Coro da Capo“ (from North Region of the Black Forest) assembled a concert programme „**4 Elemente**“ over 1 ½ years to present 4 concerts with it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tP0AWX0rLQk>

The choir sings 10 songs as a whole, the male singers sing 1 extra, the female singers as well. Each 3 songs are thematically linked to one element, e.g. „Dust in the wind“ to Air, „Orinoco flow“ to Water, „The greatest show“ to Fire. Next to this, the (verbal) presentation highlights the elements. The programme is filled up with contributions of solo singers („In the air tonight“) and a small group, to give the choir singers time to change clothes and the stage crew to change the setting. Most notable about the show concept is the **optical aspect**. Singers are dressed in **colours** symbolizing each element. The same colours dominate the **light show**. And there are fitting **background projections**.

You see that there are several things you can do as a choir to create images for the audience and tickle their imagination.

There *is* the urge for choirs to offer „something special“ to the audience; optically and musically, arrangement-wise maybe IF the choir wants to sing special suited arrangements instead of putting something „common and available“ into some glittering scheme. I sense a tendency to make choir music more attractive to overall audiences, to attract new singers and to present that choir music is FUN.

Visiting choir festivals, seeing videos of contests and concerts and modes of presentation, underline this tendency. The presentation standard is rising, clearly following the motivation of the choirs involved. Trying „market research“ on this would burst the frame of this project.

I hope to come across more examples over the next years; especially if I can add a grain to the musical understanding of the choirs involved.

If singers explore their inner elements as well, they might be – virtually – able to dive, or dig, into a mesmerizing sphere.

Provided that I, offering and promoting my concept, will get to choirs who are ready and able. Promotion is the point in this setting which will take some time to figure out.

I know where to **address choirs** on a regional or state-wide basis,

which will flow into **point 3 and 4** mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

The **next step** would be to mould concept and exercises into a printable script and find a publishing company.

In the meantime, I am gonna **broaden my concept** on the overall concert programme of my own choirs; it doesn't need the „**4 elements**“ brand on it, just explanations and a presentable, perceptible impression on the audience. With this **evaluation, along with proper documentation**, I can feed promotion issues.

Conclusion/Reflection

What did I learn from this project?

First of all to the *Course objectives*.

When I started my courses in Aalborg, I learned a lot about the inclusion of movements and body groove into rehearsals and choir music as such, from ground lift and Basic Steps to Kucheza.

Improvisation, keeping the flow and turning parts into sequences to play with - those issues got more solid foundations. I was, due to my studies before, no strict A-Z teaching choir leader; yet I am more secure now about best laid plans going astray and what to do then.

And there was a lot about the emotional way to deal with a song and arrange along that line which I learned.¹⁹

Over the time of my courses, I started to establish „The 4 elements“ and worked along.

I learned that there is not „the one way“ to pass „The 4 elements“ on to a choir or a song. (Again, I did not assume there was.) I broadened my view on flexibility and „letting things go“. I found real-world-hurdles, I would not say limitations, but detours to approach what looked nice and structured on a concept sheet. I discovered the human factor that accompanies schemes of the mind. I handled several kinds of choir and group settings. I cut down element issues and voice technique issues to understandable bits with less obvious music theory. I got a broad variety of feedback. And I, together with the choirs, got moments of success that were hard to describe and difficult to analyse. But they were „Yes“-moments.

What comes next?

See if they were fruitful and lasting. If choirs achieved long-term motivation to go this way, eagerness to try more. And if more choirs and groups will be open to strengthen their „elements“. The process goes on and will be evaluated further.

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A circle is round. And nature does its work. When you let the elements add on each other and to some degree succumb to nature, things will work. As long as you – metaphorically – got your diamond in the centre.

I heard one way to start the circular approach to elements.²⁰

Enforce/Activate (SPARK = FIRE) - Let it flow, fill up (WATER) - Check again, root, connect to your body (EARTH) – Take it out (AIR) - and to round the circle: Take it out, performing!

I chose to introduce the elements in the order EARTH – AIR – WATER – FIRE + Performance to start with the grounding and end with the „taking out“ of the whole construct.

Extended, you´ll find this in the **Annex and Exercises file, Chapter 9**.

And here is another order (see **Imagery/Intention** for reference):

Start with the intention and motivation (SPARK = FIRE) to approach a song - Explain the structure (EARTH) and find the groove - Dig into the melody (WATER) and lyrics - mark onsets and insets (AIR) - reflect the intention (FIRE) -

hand it on to different voice groups, proceed to harmony (WATER) - mark your phrasing, breath stops and dynamic balance (AIR) - on basis of the groove (EARTH), try to add bits of performance - transport this into group energy (FIRE).

So, you have most of the main parts in a circular process. Check again what more is necessary on the way. There is more than one way - but always a promising goal.

Choirs, there you go!

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- 1 As defined by: Forsyth, D. R . (2014). Group dynamics (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning
- 2 Jim Daus Hjernöe, „The intelligent choir“, Peder Karlsson „The organic choir“, Jesper Holm, „Rehearsal techniques“, Aalborg March 2014
- 3 Regards to Peder Karlsson, „The organic choir“/“An Introduction to Vocal Leadership“, August 2016
- 4 Regards to „Folsom Prison Blues“, Johnny Cash, 1955
- 5 Regards to Peder Karlsson, „The organic choir“/“An Introduction to Vocal Leadership“, August 2016
- 6 Regards to Jim Daus Hjernöe, „The intelligent choir“/„Vocal Painting“, Concept, Website and App ©®2018
- 7 Again regards to Jim Daus Hjernöe
- 8 Regards to Peder Karlsson, „The organic choir“/“An Introduction to Vocal Leadership“,
- 9 Lewin, K. Frontiers in group dynamics. I. Concept, method and reality in social science, social equilibria, Human Relations, 1947
- 10 If you´re unable to visit a high class choir concert right away for proof, just watch (again): „The greatest showman“ (Director: Michael Gracey) 2018, Song: „This is me“ (Benj Pasek/Justin Paul)
- 11 Compared to schedule plan „Modern Vocal Music – Handbook for Choir Leaders“, Malene Rigtrup and Morten Kjaer © Gule Plader, 2013
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- 13 Complete Vocal Technique/Komplette Gesangstechnik, © Cathrine Sadolin, Copenhagen, 2010
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- 15 Helmert Woudenberg, „Vuur, Water, Lucht en Aarde“, IT&FB, ABC Uitgeverij 1999
- 16 Foremost regards to Rhiannon, „Vocal River“, Rhiannon, ©® 2014 and Interview, 2019
- 17 Regards to Rhiannon, „Vocal River“, Rhiannon, ©® 2014
- 18 <https://therealgroup.se/elements-album>, ©The Real Group, Sweden, 2017
- 19 Regards in total to Peder Karlsson, Jim Daus Hjernöe, Jesper Holm and Malene Rigtrup
- 20 Interview with Terese Damsholt, Copenhagen, 29 Dec, 2018