**ACTING THE SONG GENERAL SUMMARY**

* **Prepare and rehearse your song as a speech or monologue. Write the lyrics out in paragraph form as if a speech.**
* **Listen to the music a few times to get a sense of the emotional nature of the song.**
* **If the song is from a musical and a script is available, read the play for the dramatic context**
* **Read the lyrics aloud SIMPLY, just to understand their sense**
* **Begin your preparation: Ask these questions:**
  + **What is this song about? Answer with a single phrase that expresses human action. “This song is about a person…” Write a line of dialogue that could replace the song, distilling it’s essence (most often the final lines of the song will reveal this)**
  + **Create an imaginary situation, based on your own experience, feelings and needs that will require you to speak these words to someone. Tell yourself a story.**
  + **Decide upon an objective: “if things go the way I want them to, after I sing this song…..”**
  + **Decide upon an obstacle. What would it say if it could speak? What conflict will this song resolve? What serious consequences will you suffer if you don’t achieve your objective?**
  + **Set up your circumstances so that the opposite of what you want exists at the beginning of the song. Look out into your imaginary world, something is not as you wish it to be. You’ll use the song to correct things, to make them right.**
  + **Create an opening beat for yourself, an event that triggers you, propels you into speaking the first line. The first lyric is a response to something.**
  + **Memorize the song now or take the time gradually as you rehearse**
  + **Once you are emotionally turned on in your imaginary world, with a job you need urgently to accomplish, an obstacle in your way, speak the lyrics to your imaginary partner (can be your spouse, partner, mother, group of people, God, OR a part of yourself). Speak the lyrics to make something happen – REMEMBER, YOUR PARTNER IS THE IMPORTANT ONE, NOT YOU!**
  + **Rehearse the monologue with an improvisational feel, using a variety of tactics, using each line in a new and fresh way to achieve your objective, one objective, many tactics.**

“When I watch performers I look for a natural kind of phrasing, it should be acted. When it’s just sung, there’s nothing there.”

Lynn Ahrens, lyricist/librettist