



Communications trainer Kim Page will introduce Dubai to overtone chanting with a workshop on Saturday. Victor Besa for The National

Learn the art of overtone chanting in Dubai

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At a workshop this weekend, self-confessed "voiceaholic" Kim Page will introduce Dubai to the art of overtone chanting, a technique used by Tibetan monks and a popular style of singing in Mongolia.

"It's a unique sound produced by separating the overtones from the base tone, so that two voices are heard at the same time," says Page, "like opening a door into your voice."

Besides being a passionate voice coach, the Norwegian-English 47-year-old is a communications and innovation trainer for businesses in Dubai. She moved to the UAE in January and set up the singing group Dubai Women's Voices.

Page says if you're a lousy singer, that's all the more reason to attend this workshop.

"I find it especially empowering to teach people who've been told they can't sing, because this technique is excellent for them. It's almost the opposite of singing, because you are creating and using a lot of tension whereas when you sing a melody, you're trying to get away from the tension. When people find a connection to their voice, it's like a homecoming – a recognition of something from our ancestral origin."

The chanting Page teaches is adapted from the Tibetan technique, but because our voices are not used to the kind of tension produced by those Buddhist monks, she makes a softer version.

"When you sing or listen to it, you automatically go down to the wavelength of your brain where you also meditate," she says.

Page was immersed in music from a young age. Growing up in Oslo in Norway and Gothenburg in Sweden, her dad, who was a classical musician, encouraged her to sing in school and church choirs. At 23 she moved to Berlin just after the Berlin Wall had fallen, at a time when the city was teeming with bohemian artists. It was there she developed a passion for quirky vocal techniques.

"I formed a duo called Tyskystnad with a Swedish guitarist, singing Swedish folk songs using poetry I'd written as a teenager. Even though our audience couldn't understand Swedish, we became very hip and had our own following."

While teaching English in the mid-1990s, Page stretched her vocal abilities further by singing with a Bulgarian choir. It was at a Berlin voice festival that Page met a master overtone chanter from Mongolia, who inspired her to give overtone chanting a try. "Her singing was so earthly, raw and intimate, it had very strong effect on me."

Page spent more than a year studying the technique with a master teacher in Denmark, and even gave overtone chanting concerts with her mentor. In 1996 she taught her first overtone chanting workshop in Oslo, Norway. Since then, she's taught the workshop in Copenhagen, Mexico City, Barcelona and San Francisco, and even had a vocal session with Nasa audio-engineers in Silicon Valley.

Page has a hat-full of vocal exercises for workshop attendees to experiment with.

"The sound might seem very mystical and difficult, but by the end of the workshop, everybody should be able to find that space in their voice to do it."

• Page's workshop, which costs Dh850, is on Saturday, 10am to 5pm, in Authenticity Office, Pinnacle Building #315, Al Barsha. To register, contact kimapage@kimapage.com

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