

An Interview with Sandra Oberoi

Founder and Director of Harmony - The Music School and Artistic Director of The Harmony Chorus

By Jen Jimenez, Development Director

NATS member and 2025 Intern Program Master Teacher, Sandra Oberoi, has felt the cadence of music calling her since childhood. As a three-year-old, Oberoi was already performing publicly, guided by her father. Together, they would sing an array of genres from gospel to Hindustani ghazels, Simon and Garfunkel to Sandi Patti. At the age of 12, she discovered a cappella singing and listened to complex harmonies on the few cassette tapes she had at home.

"My little sister and I would also sing ourselves to sleep every night, improvising and trying out what we thought were very "cool" harmonies," she said.

Since opportunities to participate in formal voice study were scarce in India due to lack of voice teachers and high expense, her first formal lessons began at the age of 22. Her talent, discipline, and passion for singing and teaching were immediately evident to her vocal instructor. She excelled so quickly that her voice teacher asked her to take over teaching some of his students, which she gladly accepted.



Sandra Oberoi

"I'm living out my 12-year-old self's dream with great joy and a heart full of gratitude!"

"It was during this period that I realized that along with performing, I really enjoyed sharing the gift of learning," she explained. "I eventually went on to finish degrees in vocal performance and music education which really helped develop my teaching ability."

Oberoi always felt a natural passion for studying music, but it wasn't until her first-born daughter began music lessons that she knew which path to take on her musical journey. Not pleased with her daughter's music instruction, Sandra saw a need for an independent, after-school program where students could receive high-quality music instruction.

In 2008, Oberoi opened Harmony - The Music School providing instruction to not only her two daughters, but

anyone of any age in a supportive, engaging, and nurturing environment. Since music education is not commonly included in India's school day, Harmony grew quickly with children and adults receiving voice and instrumental music instruction from highly qualified teachers.

"Since Harmony was founded, I feel so privileged to have mentored several students who have gone on to study at some of the best programs in the world," she said. "Some are now teaching and building their own studios, performing on world stages, including at Carnegie Hall, and some working with top musicians."

In addition to private and group lessons, Oberoi also launched The Harmony Chorus, a youth choir singing everything from Bollywood music to U.S. pop hits. The Harmony Chorus has currently completed four international tours, created several

music videos, and even placed in the Top 8 in a reality singing show broadcast on Indian National Television. Their YouTube channel, [TheHarmonyChorusOfficial](#), is steadily growing and allows their work to be showcased on a global stage as cultural ambassadors.

Her newest initiative, Harmony International, is a global wing and extension of her work in India.

"I am keen to continue developing this international entity," she said. "We're curating programs worldwide that continue celebrating the democratization of the vocal curriculum and offer professional development programs for early-career teachers."

"One doesn't always have to have a grand or glorious start; however, patience, consistency and dedication is the key to ensure its success over time."

As an independent school owner and teacher, she is happy to share her successes and challenges of owning a business

with her NATS colleagues. She believes that hard work speaks for itself and listening to what the student needs, rather than selling what her school offers, enables her to creatively highlight how the products can benefit the student.

When asked what advice she might give a fellow voice teacher thinking of opening an independent studio, Oberoi said don't despise humble beginnings.

"Little drops always add up and moreover the good seeds you sow today will bear fruit in due season," she said. "That is just how the world works. I have seen it repeatedly in several projects that I've started at the school. One doesn't always have to have a grand or glorious start; however, patience, consistency and dedication is the key to ensure its success over time."



Clifton Ware Group-Voice Pedagogy Award

Award to support voice instruction within a group setting

The Group-Voice Pedagogy Award has been established by Clifton Ware, professor emeritus (voice, voice pedagogy), University of Minnesota Twin Cities and a long-time NATS member. It is designed to highlight the concept of group voice and its potential impact for singers through offerings in community, independent, and academic settings.



Eligibility

Applicants for this award must be NATS members in good standing who want to advance the idea of learning to sing together in group voice instructional settings of any size. Submissions should reflect your aspirations and qualifications to further Group Voice Pedagogy and how the award will be used. These may include developing or being part of practicums, workshops, attaining or developing instructional resources, or any other number of ideas related to group voice pedagogy. The annual award amount is up to \$1,000. Scan the QR code for more information.



Application deadline May 8, 2025



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