



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of TEACHERS of SINGING

inter nos

VOL. 54, NO. 2 • Fall 2021

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CONTENTS

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COLUMNS

- 4 Association Notes
- 5 Independent Voices editor column
- 47 Development Notes

NATS PROGRAMS

- 9 2021 NSA winners
- 13 2021 Summer Workshop review
- 16 2020 Intern Program Review
- 18 2021 Intern Program Review

INDEPENDENT VOICES

- 7 "Learning to Sing," a poem
- 22 TikTok Teacher
- 24 Encouraging adults to honor their childhood performances

FEATURES

- 28 Using online platforms to create community in the voice studio
- 32 Trauma-informed voice pedagogy

UPDATES

- 35 New officers; board photo roster for 2021/22
- 36 Nominations for national office
- 42 Framing Our Future gifts

inter nos

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ASSOCIATION NOTES

Riding the waves

By Allen Henderson, NATS Executive Director

For NATS summer was a “sweet spot” in the ongoing pandemic. As case rates subsided and the economy began reopening, NATS was able to host several smaller scale face to face events in May and June. The postponed 2020 and the 2021 NATS Intern Programs were our first live events since the 2020 NATS Winter Workshop in New York City 18 months prior and were a celebratory and successful return to live programming. Our hosts at Georgia Southern University and past presidents Linda Snyder and Karen Brunssen cooperatively established safety protocols that allowed these events to thrive and fully live up to their expectation as career changing events. You can read reflections from some of our interns (page 16 and 18).

The third major live event was the 2021 NATS board of directors meeting in Jacksonville Beach. While your board has successfully managed to meet virtually for TWO YEARS, there is really no substitution for the face to face interaction, discussion, debate, and conversation that happens when we meet face to face to accomplish the important business of our association. The board spent the largest block of time over our two day meeting under the guidance of consultants Alejandra Valarino Boyer and Theresa Ruth Howard as they led us in conversations and training surrounding inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. While we have several committees also interfacing with these topics, this was the first time our board of directors as a whole has been trained as we work to ensure we meet our obligation to continuously improve as an organization. Additional training will happen this fall with a wider circle of leaders and we anticipate introducing required training for all leaders and providing access to online training to all members in early 2022.

Choosing to hold the 2021 Summer Workshop virtually proved a sound decision as, by July, the Delta variant was beginning its rise around the U.S. Now, as school has begun for many, we are again in a crisis situation in some aspects worse than last year. As positive case rates increase, we are faced with a polarized public and political leaders who have limited the ability of many to reinstate various protective measures advocated by public health officials and the CDC. Many of our international members also are facing a resurgence in cases and reinstated mandates. While our independent teachers are able to control more freely their working environment, those who work at institutions, particularly public ones, are being forced to teach in unsafe environments due to low vaccination rates. Some of our colleagues have not been teaching on their campuses for over 18 months and so have never even had to learn and understand many of the protocols some campuses used last year and are rightfully concerned for their safety during re-entry.

NATS continues to monitor the latest research and information that can guide us all in our work. Our [June webinar](#), subsequent pre-publication of an [article](#) based on that webinar, and other additional resources on our [COVID-19 Resources](#) page and [YouTube channel](#) are still valuable tools for all. We continue to suggest



Allen Henderson
NATS Executive Director

(continued on page 6)



Cynthia Vaughn with 2020 Interns CJ Greer, Sarah Bucher, and Sarah Folsom

Leaving Disneyland

By Cynthia Vaughn

It's hard to process what an incredible, magical, immersive, inspiring, and possibly life-changing experience I had at Georgia Southern University as a master teacher for the 2020 NATS Professional Intern Program. (Postponed to 2021 due to Covid.) For many of us this was the first time in many months to travel on a plane, eat in a shared dining space with strangers, and most importantly to make music together live and in-person. That's some pretty trippy stuff after the year and a half we've just had!

I have been to Disney parks twice in my lifetime. The first time was a family trip to Anaheim, California when I was 12 years old and I don't remember much except pre-teen angst. The second time I visited a Disney park was during the 2012 NATS Conference in Orlando, Florida. My daughter Katy Vaughn had been invited to appear on a NATS panel about performing for cruise ships, along with casting directors for Disney and other cruise lines. Katy had just finished a 10-month main stage performer cruise contract on the Disney Dream and she had cast passes to Disney World. So we played hooky one conference day and spent the whole day at Disney World. I will never forget what it felt like to walk down Main Street at age 55 with my 25-year old grown up child, and experience Disney magic for the very first time. I was overcome with emotion and burst into tears of joy at first site of the iconic castle. My daughter cried with me and we immersed ourselves in the whole experience. We rode rides (not the scary ones because I'm a wimp), we saw the Tiki show and Pirates of the Caribbean,

we went on a Safari, and journeyed to space. We ate too much sugary, greasy food and I had the theme song to "It's a Small World" stuck in my head for days. We soaked up everything we could and it was exhausting and magical.

That's kind of how the NATS Professional Intern Program felt to me. I marveled at the scenic beauty of Georgia and genuine Southern hospitality. (I have never been Yes-Ma'amed so much in my life.) So many people planned, prepared, pivoted, and worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that we had a great experience. I was amazed at the incredible teaching and artistry of the early career NATS voice teachers and collaborative piano coaching interns. I immersed myself in masterclasses and presentations about voice science, vocal health, historic black singers, and a profoundly beautiful artists concert. I was excited to experience the wonderful teaching of my intern cohort, and so very proud to see the progress of their temporary students as the intern teachers grew in confidence, skill, and friendship. Twice, I got to share the stage with my intern colleagues, first in a delightfully different "sing what brings you joy" masterclass. The second week of the program I honored my late mentor by presenting an interactive pedagogy presentation, "Introduction to Meribeth



Cynthia Vaughn
Associate Editor
for *Inter Nos*
CynthiaVaughn@mac.com

Dayme's CoreSinging: A Joyful Approach to Singing and Voice Pedagogy." Along the way, I was able to meet and mingle with the other program participants—faculty, interns, and students—who were not in my assigned cohort. I laughed a lot, especially with my voice interns Sarah Bucher, C.J. Greer, Sarah Folsom and collaborative piano coaching interns Natalie Sherer and Qiao Zheng Goh. It was truly magical and I won't soon forget it.

As I write this, it is three days after leaving Disneyland, I mean NATS Intern Program. My East Coast to West Coast jet lag is waning. My suitcase is unpacked, but I still have some laundry to do while I answer about a billion non-urgent emails that I ignored while in Georgia. I have projects to dive into and some big life stuff to navigate. It would be easy to go back to the same routine and daily stresses, however, I am determined not to waste the wonder. I have started journaling again, writing down new ideas, practicing gratitude, walking daily, and taking care of my health.

I have read many posts from NATS colleagues who attended continuing education and training programs this summer, either virtually or in-person. Many of you came away with creative ideas, new skills, greater knowledge, and renewed human connection. After months of malaise, some of you came away

refreshed, motivated, and inspired—you remembered why we do what we do. "Disneyland" was great, but eventually we all have to go back to our real lives and teaching studios and figure out how to keep and share some of the magic. This summer we took

"We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;—
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems . . ."

—Excerpt by Arthor O'Shaughnessy

far less for granted. It was a turning point for many and I can't wait to see what creativity you will unleash, what career choices you will make, what life and family choices you will make, and what books you will write, literally and metaphorically.

Cynthia Vaughn, June 6, 2021
Richland, Washington

Riding the waves *(continued from page 4)*

that everyone manage personal risk; use the recommended ventilation, room size, distancing, and length of sessions data to plan your work; and advocate for all possible to be vaccinated. Our joint statement, issued over the summer, has already been used effectively by some colleagues to advocate for safer working conditions. I am grateful for our partner organizations and the experts who have joined us this past year to keep us informed and armed with facts and science informed data. I also encourage you to join our #fighthefatigue campaign by sharing some of our social media images with your colleagues and students. Many of these are uplifting reminders about self-care as we continue to weather the ups and downs before us.

As the fall season begins, many of our chapters and regions are again facing the choice of holding live or virtual audition events. It is likely that we will see a mixture of modes this fall as leaders meet host venue requirements that may change with little notice. Fortunately, our systems are now prepared for an easy transition to virtual mode should the need arise. Please be patient with our volunteer leaders and also grateful for their service as they work tirelessly to create valuable feedback experiences for your students.

We hope to ride the wave to a return of live national events in January with the 2022 Winter Workshop in New York City on a theme of "Matters of Style." Very soon you also will be hearing about the 2022 NATS National Conference in Chicago. It promises to be an exciting event with more sessions than ever before as we come together in celebration of our profession. Stay tuned for the announcement of the exciting lineup.

Our success in these times, as always, is dependent on our dedicated and faithful members who have ridden the waves with us during this turbulent time. I have been gratified to read so many positive messages about how NATS supported you during this time, how it has been a lifeline of support, and how our community has come together to support one another. While our founders likely never envisioned a pandemic event of this magnitude that would impact our profession so profoundly, I am certain they envisioned a strong community of mutual support within our profession and would indeed be proud of the association we are today.

Keep the faith, and let's continue to ride the waves together. As always, if you have questions or comments, please reach out to me at allen@nats.org



Learning to Sing

by Susan Spaeth Cherry

I stand in the sand
at the edge of a sea
inviting and frightening
as brand-new love.
I tiptoe in, feel the tickle
of tide on my toes,
then inch into vast cerulean.
I cannot swim,
but the waves are gentle.
Lie down, they say,
and try to breathe.
I thrash on my back,
first a little, then a lot,
determined not to be deterred
by splashes of brine
in my nose and mouth.
And little by little,
I sync with the surf,
then linger, linger,
awash in wholeness.

*Susan Spaeth Cherry ©2021
Printed with permission*

Poet Susan Spaeth Cherry is a first time adult voice student in Evanston, Illinois. She is discovering her singing voice with NATS member Meredith Colby.

NATIONAL Student Auditions

— ★ ★ ★ —
National Association of Teachers of Singing

**TOTAL PRIZES:
MORE THAN
\$48,500**

**FIRST PLACE, SECOND
PLACE and THIRD PLACE**
prizes will be awarded in
each category.



See complete rules, regulations,
and repertoire information at
nats.org

NATS National Student Auditions are headed for Chicago!

The excitement of NATS National Student Auditions continues with a national round of competition and prizes at the NATS 57th National Conference in Chicago, IL.

REGION – PRELIMINARY ROUNDS

Audition in YOUR Regional Event.
Five singers from each regional category with a national category equivalent will advance to National Online Screening.

NATIONAL ONLINE SCREENING

Friday, April 8, 2022 - Deadline for online digital submissions.

SEMIFINAL AND FINAL ROUNDS

Top three singers from each category advance to final round.
1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners receive prize money.

ELIGIBILITY

All singers ages 14-30 as of your regional audition date.

Audition Categories

Category*	Age Limit	Years of Study
MT 3-A Lower HS Musical Theatre Treble Voice	14-16	9th and 10th Grade
MT 3-B Upper HS Musical Theatre Treble Voice	16-19	11th and 12th Grade
MT 4-A Lower HS Musical Theatre TBB Voice	14-16	9th and 10th Grade
MT 4-B Upper HS Musical Theatre TBB Voice	16-19	11th and 12th Grade
CL 3-A Lower HS Classical Treble Voice	14-16	9th and 10th Grade
CL 3-B Upper HS Classical Treble Voice	16-19	11th and 12th Grade
CL 4-A Lower HS Classical TBB Voice	14-16	9th and 10th Grade
CL 4-B Upper HS Classical TBB Voice	16-19	11th and 12th Grade
MT 5 Lower Musical Theatre Treble Voice	22	0-2 post high school
MT 6 Lower Musical Theatre TBB Voice	22	0-2 post high school
CL 5 Lower Classical Treble Voice	22	0-2 post high school
CL 6 Lower Classical TBB Voice	22	0-2 post high school
MT 7 Upper Musical Theatre Treble Voice	25	3-5 post HS, all undergraduate
MT 8 Upper Musical Theatre TBB Voice	25	3-5 post HS, all undergraduate
CL 7 Upper Classical Treble Voice	25	3-5 post HS, all undergraduate
CL 8 Upper Classical TBB Voice	25	3-5 post HS, all undergraduate
CL 9 Advanced Classical Treble Voice	30	4+ post high school
CL 10 Advanced Classical TBB Voice	30	4+ post high school
HJ 7 Hall Johnson Spirituals Category		no limit; undergrad Treble/TBB

*Treble Voice: Soprano, Mezzo-soprano, Contralto, Countertenor. TBB Voice: Tenor, Baritone, Bass

2021 National Student Auditions winners

The final round of the NATS 2021 National Student Auditions (NSA) was held Wednesday, July 7 on the [OfficialNATS YouTube channel](#). NATS awarded more than \$36,000 in prizes to the NSA winners, who were officially announced to an online audience of teachers, collaborative pianists, parents, friends and family members. Watch the [complete recording of the finals round](#) with interviews with adjudicators and performances by all the finalists on the [OfficialNATS YouTube channel](#).

Thousands of performances by singers at region auditions throughout the United States and Canada resulted in a record 1,148 applicants for the 2021 national preliminary round of NSA.

Congratulations to all winners and to everyone who participated!

PLACE—WINNER	REGION	TEACHER
Category 1—High School Music Theater Treble Voice		
3rd: Elizabeth Howlett	NORTHWESTERN	Darla Pumphrey
1st Place: Ava Kuntz	CAL-WESTERN	Kathleen Martin
1st Place: Audry Logan	EASTERN	Hilerie Klein Rensi
Category 2—High School Music Theater Tenor Baritone Bass Voice		
3rd Place: Wyatt Toloczko	MID-SOUTH	Elizabeth Huling
2nd Place: Paris Manzanares	GREAT LAKES	Liz Gray
1st Place: Will Porter	SOUTHERN	Angela Collier
Category 3—High School Classical Treble Voice		
4th Place: Audrey Logan	EASTERN	Hilerie Klein Rensi
3rd Place: Caitlin Chisham	WEST CENTRAL	Cristina Castaldi
2nd Place: Lauren Albano	SOUTHERN	Phyllis S. Treigle
1st Place: Sam Higgins	NEW ENGLAND	Corey Dalton Hart
Category 4—High School Classical Tenor Baritone Bass Voice		
3rd Place: Bradley Boatright	TEXOMA	Michelle Hache
2nd Place: Daniel Shirk	NORTH CENTRAL	Christine Flasch
1st Place: Saman de Silva	CAL-WESTERN	Jace Wittig
Category 16—High School American Negro Spiritual		
3rd Place: Jackson Haywood	MID-ATLANTIC	Brandi Icard
2nd Place: Isaiah Morton	MID-ATLANTIC	Meredith Cornwell
1st Place**: Chance Ridgeway	MID-SOUTH	Michael Preacely

** Prize Presented by the North Carolina Chapter of NATS

Category 5—Lower Musical Theatre Treble Voice		
3rd Place: Sabrina Shah	EASTERN	Jenai La Vita
2nd Place: Anna Bakun	NORTHWESTERN	Erin G. McCarthy
1st Place: Naomi Latta	CENTRAL	Andrea Pope
Category 6—Lower Musical Theatre Tenor Baritone Bass Voice		
3rd Place: Noah Detar	EASTERN	Mario E. Martinez
2nd Place: Chase Lowary	CAL-WESTERN	Laurinda Nikkel
1st Place: Noah Strube	NORTH CENTRAL	Mimmi K. Fulmer

(continued next page)

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PLACE—WINNER	REGION	TEACHER
Category 7—Lower Classical Treble Voice		
3rd Place: Meghan Willey	MID-ATLANTIC	Carrie Stevens
2nd Place: Molly McDonough	CENTRAL	Leanne Gayle Freeman-Miller
1st Place**: Madelin Morales	EASTERN	Kathryn Cowdrick
** Dorothy Sawatski Prize		
Category 8—Lower Classical Tenor Baritone Bass Voice		
4th Place: John Dubois	TEXOMA	James Rodriguez
3rd Place: Anthony Voiers	SOUTHERN	Kelly Ann Bixby
2nd Place: Collin Jumes	TEXOMA	Paul R. Piersall Jr.
1st Place: Justice Yates	SOUTHEASTERN	M. Jane Christeson
Category 17—First thru Third Year College Age American Negro Spiritual		
3rd Place: Traicoryon West	MID-SOUTH	Tana Rene Field-Bartholomew
2nd Place: Nazarene Maloney	MID-ATLANTIC	Marquita Lister
1st Place: Christopher Richie	TEXOMA	Autumn West
Category 9—Upper Musical Theatre Treble Voice		
4th Place: Jasmine Marie Reyes	CAL-WESTERN	Jacque Wilson Scharlach
3rd Place: Anna Yannessa	CENTRAL	Steven Tharp
2nd Place: Brianna Reed	TEXOMA	Kelly M. Holst
1st Place: Olivia Myers	SOUTHERN	Liesl Dromi
Category 10—Upper Musical Theatre Tenor Baritone Bass Voice		
3rd Place: Joe Caskey	TEXOMA	Kelly M. Holst
2nd Place: Charlie Bensinger	EASTERN	Lisa Wilson DeNolfo
1st Place: Caleb Mitchell	MID-SOUTH	Stephanie Jones
Category 11—Upper Classical Treble Voice		
3rd Place: Alexandra Burch	NORTH CENTRAL	Daniel Johnson-Wilmot
2nd Place: Malone Blaich	CAL-WESTERN	Melanie Emelio
1st Place: Lauren Randolph	CENTRAL	Theresa Brancaccio
Category 12—Upper Classical Tenor Baritone Bass Voice		
3rd Place: Cameron King	SOUTHEASTERN	Jeffrey Springer
2nd Place: Seth Clarke	TEXOMA	Barbara Hill Moore
1st Place: Hayden Smith	EASTERN	Marcus DeLoach
Category 13—Advanced Classical Treble Voice		
2nd Place: Tess Ottinger	MID-ATLANTIC	Elizabeth Daniels
2nd Place: Ellen Robertson	CENTRAL	Karen Brunssen
1st Place: Helaine Liebman	CENTRAL	Pamela J. Hinchman
Category 14—Advanced Classical Tenor Baritone Bass Voice		
3rd Place: David Szabo	MID-ATLANTIC	Danielle Talamantes
2nd Place: Yinghui "Mark" He	NEW ENGLAND	Marjorie Melnick
1st Place: Jonas Jud	NEW ENGLAND	Adriana Zabala
Category 18—Fourth/Fifth Year College Age and Graduate Age American Negro Spiritual		
2nd Place: Elliott Brown	MID-ATLANTIC	Dominic Armstrong
2nd Place: Karen Davila	TEXOMA	Melinda A. Brou
1st Place**: Arianna Rodriguez	MID-ATLANTIC	Elizabeth Daniels

****American Spiritual Ensemble Prize**



Studio photo courtesy of VOIX DE VIVRE.

Missed the 2021 Virtual Summer Workshop?

It's not too late to see what the excitement was about! Packages are now available for purchase.

When you log in to the Live Learning Center, you'll experience a fabulous user-friendly platform. Our partners at Multiview have worked vigorously to update the site with new features including a faster load time, sleek look, and effortless navigation. Additionally, this website is entirely mobile friendly on all devices.



NATS 2021 Virtual Summer Workshop

Full Conference Package - Limited time offer!
\$199 Members | \$229 Non-Members

Email multiviewmediasupport@multiview.com for member access.

REMINDER to our 2021 VIRTUAL Summer Workshop attendees

All 2021 Virtual Summer Workshop registrants have received an email providing FREE access to all of the session videos until January 31, 2022.

Email multiviewmediasupport@multiview.com for assistance.

To access the NATS Live Learning Center, please visit nats.sclivelearningcenter.com

2022 NATS WINTER WORKSHOP

MATTERS OF
STYLE

REFRESH • REFINE • REFUEL

JANUARY 7-9, 2022

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC, NEW YORK CITY

Join us for a musical makeover in the Big Apple where you'll learn how to flourish stylistically as an artist and teacher. From jazzy riffs to snazzy headshots, let our experts help transform your style — both for performance and professionally. Sessions will feature a variety of genres to refresh and refine your repertoire knowledge of classical, musical theatre and popular song interpretation. Plus, refuel your spirit with LIVE music at the semifinal and final rounds of the NATS Artist Awards and National Musical Theatre Competition, held in conjunction with this workshop.

— FEATURING —



Aaron Grant
L2 Artists

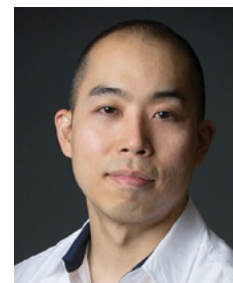
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Professional Headshots"



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Faymous Images



Justin John Moniz
New York University
"Pop/Rock and Drop It:
A Vowel Driven
Approach to CCM Pedagogy"



Noa Kageyama
The Juilliard School
"Becoming More
'Pressure-Proof'"

MORE PRESENTERS TO BE ANNOUNCED

Early-bird deadline: Nov. 15, 2021
\$249 NATS member rate [\$279 after Nov. 15]

**Book at Aloft Harlem by Dec. 15
to secure rates**
\$109/king or \$129/double plus tax

Register today at NATS.org

DeMar Neal, Vice President for Workshops



Marcia Porter



**Natalie Douglas
& David Sabella**



**LeOui Janse van
Rensburg**



**Mutsumi Moteki
& Kumiko Shimizu**

NATS Virtual Summer Workshop highlights

By DeMar Neal, vice president for workshops

On the heels of the successful Winter Workshop and due to ongoing pandemic conditions, NATS continued the virtual trend by hosting the Summer Workshop online. This time the theme centered on diversity in vocal repertoire, with wide-ranging topics from an impressive international panel of scholars and experts.

After a brief welcome message from NATS Executive Director Allen Henderson and Vice President for Workshops DeMar Neal, the first day began with a session by John Wesley Wright, who advocated for civic engagement in the community through creative repertoire programming. Following this session, Mutsumi Moteki and Kumiko Shimizu elucidated the finer points of Japanese art song, diction, and performance, based on their recently published anthology. In the afternoon, Marcia Porter presented *Sounds of the Soul: Art Songs of Black Women Composers*, offering biographical information and resources for performance. Then the co-founders of the project *A Modern Reveal*, Randi Marrazzo and Nicole Leone, showcased their recently published anthology *24 Italian Songs & Arias by Women Composers*. An informal Zoom social with Allen Henderson and DeMar Neal capped the first day of the workshop.

The second day continued to highlight diverse repertoire, with back-to-back morning sessions led by LeOui Rensburg, who focused on the development, diction, composers, and performance of Afrikaans art song. Switching continents, Bahia-based Gisele Pires Mota then gave a presentation on the history, diction, and cultural aspects of Brazilian art song. Returning to the United States, Kenneth Overton treated attendees to an enlightening session titled *Embedded in the*

Soil and Sung from the SOUL: The American Negro Spiritual.

The evening concluded with a conversation between NATS President Carole Blankenship and DeMar Neal, who discussed present and upcoming opportunities and initiatives for NATS members

The third and final day began with a pair of important conversations led by Manhattan-based teacher David Sabella. In the first, he spoke with singer Natalie Douglas on the importance of and ways to amplify BIPOC voices in American song. He followed with another discussion with Marilyn Lester, former Executive Director of the American Songbook Association, and the Duke Ellington Foundation, in *Exploring the Great African American Songbook*. The final educational session featured Sequina Dubose, who explored 21st-century cross-genre vocal literature, with special focus given to American operas. The workshop concluded with another informal Zoom social, again led by Carole Blankenship and DeMar Neal.

Again, I am humbled and honored to work with such a core of dedicated workers and volunteers. I am particularly appreciative of Todd Vigiletti and his team at Stargazer Productions, who continued their smooth technical execution of these virtual events. Blake from EGAMI AVI deserves praise for his video editing and uploading of sessions to the NATS Live Learning Center. Several NATS members volunteered to introduce our clinicians and monitor chat streams including Mark Kano, Susan Bender, Marcia Porter, and Karen Brunssen. As always, I am so grateful to the NATS staff for their tireless efforts behind the scenes; thank you Deborah, Tina, Allen, Beth, and Karen for all that you've done and do!

Join us for the Winter Workshop!

See details on facing page.

Volunteers needed for the 57th National Conference

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Be an asset to our team!

Please make plans now to help support the NATS 57th National Conference, July 1-6, 2022 in Chicago, by giving a gift of time and volunteering to help with registration, session support, ticket staffing, being a Welcome Ambassador, or volunteer support staff member. Any gift of time will be greatly appreciated and will ensure that you are an important part of this wonderful event.

For more information, [e-mail](#) us or call our office at 904-992-9101.

CALL FOR POSTER PAPERS

**DEADLINE:
Dec. 1, 2021**

The National Association of Teachers of Singing invites all NATS members and friends to submit abstracts for presentation consideration in poster paper format at the 57th National Conference in Chicago (July 1-6, 2022). Topics for poster papers may include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ▶ Voice Pedagogy | ▶ Voice Science |
| ▶ The Private Studio | ▶ Technology and Teaching |
| ▶ Vocal Repertoire | ▶ Performance Practice |
| ▶ Commercial Styles | ▶ Musicological Studies |

... or any other topic related to the art and science of singing and teaching singing.

Abstracts should not exceed 500 words in length and should be uploaded in PDF or Microsoft Word format as a file attachment through the submission portal at [nats.org](#). Only electronic submissions will be considered.

To submit a poster paper proposal: Visit [nats.org](#) and complete the online application. You will be asked to upload your abstract through the online portal. **Only online submissions will be accepted.**



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING
57TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

July 1-6, 2022

CHICAGO

let's go!



with special guest
John Holiday

John Holiday Photo: Shervin Lainez



JULY 1-6, 2022
57th National Conference

Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile

Community Sing Session ★ Over 50 Breakout Sessions
Special Topics for Early Morning Coffee and Conversation Sessions
Expanded Student Workshops ★ National Student Auditions

nats.org/chicago2022



The participants of the 2020 NATS Intern Program [Photo by Frank Fortune]

2020 NATS Intern Program: Even COVID-19 Can't Stop Us

By Casey Robards and Daniel Stein, Class of 2020 Interns

It was possibly the most highly anticipated NATS Intern Program to date. After NATS made public the names of the 2020 Professional interns, the comments from previous interns about the program flooded social media. It was a coveted position. Then the world was flipped on its head. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the program to be indefinitely put on hold. The 2020 class of interns, master teachers, and administrators met virtually on what was to be the first day of the program, in May of 2020, to get to know one another. It was an exciting time and helped whet our appetite for the program to take place in May 2021. The level of sheer joy and excitement of simply being together in a group with other people, let alone an incredible group of professional interns and master teachers, was magnificent.

Having begun in 1991 and generously funded by the NATS foundation, the NATS Intern Program is an incredible opportunity for twelve early career voice teachers and four collaborative pianists to be mentored by a quintet of distinguished educators. The program was an intense 10-day experience hosted at Georgia Southern University. From the opening meeting, where we all introduced ourselves, it was clear the experience would be transformative. The days began with each intern teaching a lesson to one of their two volunteer students for observation by their respective master teacher and fellow interns. The volunteer students from the Statesboro, GA area were eager, open, and willing

individuals. After the lessons concluded, each cohort ate lunch together while discussing the day's lessons and any other topics deemed important. The afternoon and evening sessions included masterclasses by all five master teachers with their respective interns, as well as presentations: a lecture recital titled "Toward Justice and Shared Humanity: Art Song of Black Americans as Lens, Language, Vision, and Hope" (Davis) and lectures titled "The Practice of Vowel Tuning for Optimal Resonance and Registration" (LeFevre), "Breaking Barriers: Pioneering Black Singers in Opera" (Southern), and "Introduction to Meribeth Dayme's CoreSinging®: A Joyful Approach to Singing and Teaching" (Vaughn) to keep the brain teeming with information. There was also a roundtable discussion about higher education, a discussion about independent studio management, a guest presentation on voice science by Dr. David Young, and 2 evening sessions where Literature Liaison, Dr. Tana Field, joined us to share not only what was new and exciting in the world of vocal music, but to bestow incredible donations made by many of the industry's leading publishing companies and even a few individual authors/composers. The conclusion of the program was a recital of the volunteer students performing one of the songs worked on in their lessons. The entire experience was geared toward helping the interns grow in all facets and continue the journey to be the best we can be, regardless of whether in an academic or independent studio setting.



2020 NATS Intern Master Teachers: (from left) Carla LeFevre, Valerie Trujillo, Program Director Linda Snyder, Ollie Watts Davis, and Cynthia Vaughn (Missing: Dean Southern) [Photo by Frank Fortune]

The participants of the intern program, while incredibly busy during their time together, also made ample time for fellowship. We gathered outside of the daily events and conversed, reveled, and made wonderful new friends/colleagues.

A huge thank you goes to three people who were able to keep everything running like a well-oiled machine: program director Dr. Linda Snyder, site host Dr. Tamara Wilson, and NATS Executive Director Dr. Allen Henderson. Thank you also to Georgia Southern University for their hospitality and to NATS for the generosity of providing this opportunity for the participants.

—Daniel Stein

Collaborative Piano and the NATS Intern Program

As a pianist, I'm grateful that NATS is enlivening the participation and training of collaborative pianists in this Intern Program in ways that extend beyond playing for voice lessons.

2020 Master Teacher, Valerie Trujillo led a cohort of four collaborative pianists, quickly establishing a mentoring relationship with us through observation and dialogue about coaching from the piano, coaching singer/piano duos, playing orchestrally, programming, the art of negotiation, career advancement and many other topics. The intensive ended with a group recital of student singers who had each worked closely with one NATS Intern Voice teacher, and may have coached with two of the collaborative piano Interns. Each collaborative intern was given a generous opportunity to conduct a public

coaching/masterclass. It was both nerve-wracking, exhilarating, humbling and quite a privilege to share this time with our colleagues, as each Piano Intern took a turn coaching an Intern singer/pianist pair in art song or arias by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, H.T. Burleigh, Debussy and Heggie.

The NATS 2020 Intern program became a landmark for me as a result of several moments:

Fun, rapport, and targeted conversation with my pianist colleagues—sometimes focused within a coaching or masterclass, other times meandering during meals or late-night chats.

Focused attention from Valerie Trujillo, our collaborative pianist Master Teacher; giving us individual feedback, ideas for improvement, and encouragement suited to our current life and career situations.

Ideas, inspiration, (and fellow geekery) from the 2020 Voice Interns; Future plans were made for recitals, masterclasses, conference proposals, coachings, school visits and more collaboration!

Leadership and guidance: Of practical help was a panel discussion with all of the Master Teachers and conference administrators in which panelists spoke from personal experience, acknowledging the challenges and particularities of being in a freelance, academic, or independent studio.

—Casey Robards

In Review: 2021 NATS Intern Program

By 2021 Interns Sarah Kim, Meredith Pyle, Joseph Welch, and Joshua Glasner

After nearly two years of remote lessons and limited social interaction, spending 10 days in Georgia surrounded by like-minded people teaching, learning, performing, and making music together felt like a balm for the soul. What we found this summer was healing and inspiring, and it left us optimistic for the future of singing.

One of the true benefits of the NATS Intern Program was the feedback-loop that was created each day in studio class. Every morning started with teaching and observing voice lessons; each of which was followed by substantive discussions about the specific strategies employed and the respective efficacy of those decisions. It allowed us to exchange ideas with each other and to learn from the Master Teachers. The result was a warehouse full of new tools and concepts, along with a renewed confidence in our teaching abilities. So often, dogma, systemic power structures, and personal bias influence what we think works in the studio. It was eye opening to see such a variety of different methods work so effectively. Many roads lead to Rome.

Empowered by our new mentors, we were free to perform a wide range of repertoire and encouraged to improvise and to arrange. In this heightened sense of collaboration, we found artistic integrity in our, and our students,' performances. Together, we discovered a collective optimism and an openness that allowed us to confront our preconceptions and to develop new perspectives about our craft. We challenged everything from how we use vocalises to train singers, to how we approach repertoire selection and

programming for our personal performances, collaborations, and private studios. We were pushed to include and perform numerous musical styles—a unique experience for many! We broke from the old norm, and the new precedence of honoring all styles was liberating, freeing, and invigorating for singers and collaborative pianists. NATS galvanized us to do even more in the future.

Perhaps the clearest example of this commitment to diverse repertoire, methods, and ideas was the positive and supportive atmosphere we experienced in the final recital of the program. There, performers, interns, and Master Teachers alike embraced the hard-earned successes of ten days of intense study and music-making. The students bravely performed musical styles ranging from opera to pop music, from musical theatre to jazz, from art song to rock. It was exciting to see NATS as an organization and our peers encourage students to perform so many musical styles and music from a variety of cultural traditions.

All of us were left wanting more—if only we could bottle up the energy of this “grand finale,” and the support exuded by all involved! Each of us went back home with the distinct desire to recapture the enthusiasm, passion, and focus involved in the NATS Intern Program, and to share it with our students, our colleagues, and our communities.

The 2021 NATS Interns sincerely thank the entire NATS organization, Georgia Southern University, the NATS Foundation, and the countless individuals involved in envisioning and creating this life-changing experience!





The 2020 and 2021 NATS Intern Program participants on stairs at Georgia Southern University. The 2020 program was rescheduled due to the pandemic, allowing a unique overlap of a couple days between both groups.



2021 NATS Intern Master Teachers: (from left) Frank Ragsdale, Kari Ragan, Michelle Markwart Deveau, Valerie Trujillo, and Theresa Brancaccio. (Not pictured: Craig Terry). Photo credit: Frank Fortune.

2021 Intern Program Participants

Voice Interns: Corie Auger, Douglas Carpenter, Joshua Glasner, Lily Guerrero, Sarah Kim, Caitlin Moore, Whitney Myers, Aaron Paige, Meredith Pyle, Kyle Sackett, Emily Siar and Marcy Stonikas.

Collaborative Piano Interns: Taylor Hutchinson, Kyung-Eun Na, Tomasz Robak and Joseph Welch.

Voice Master Teachers: Theresa Brancaccio (Northwestern University); Frank Ragsdale (University of Miami); Michelle Markwart Deveau (Independent Studio, CA); Kari Ragan (University of Washington, Independent Studio).

Collaborative Piano Master Teachers: Craig Terry (Ryan Opera Center, Lyric Opera of Chicago) and Valerie Trujillo (Florida State University)



ANNOUNCING THE 2022 NATS Intern Program

May 30 – June 10, 2022

Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia

Karen Brunssen, Director of the NATS Intern Program
Tamara Watson Harper, Local Coordinator • Tana Field, Literature Liaison

The NATS Intern Program is an exciting and innovative venture that seeks to pair experienced and recognized master teachers with talented early career members of NATS. We invite both independent and academic voice teachers and collaborative pianists to apply. Each voice intern teaches lessons to two students and performs in master classes under the supervision of a master teacher. Collaborative piano interns accompany lessons, master classes, and other sessions as appropriate, and coach students under the supervision of the collaborative piano master teacher.

FACULTY: MASTER TEACHERS

VOICE

- Barbara Hill Moore (Southern Methodist University)
- Scott Piper (University of Michigan)
- Eden Casteel (Independent Studio, RI)
- Darryl Taylor (University of California, Irvine)

COLLABORATIVE PIANO

- Alan Darling (Northwestern, Bienen School of Music)

REQUIREMENTS

A voice applicant must be a Full or Associate member of NATS in good standing with no more than five years of full-time teaching or the part-time equivalent. Working as a graduate teaching assistant does not count towards the five-year limit. Holding a master's degree or higher is preferable but not required. A collaborative piano applicant does not have to be a NATS member (although preference is given to those who are), but membership is required if accepted into the program. Applicants should be at the beginning of their careers with no more than approximately five years of full-time collaborative work/teaching/coaching or the part-time equivalent.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Complete the application form online at [NATS.org](https://nats.org), which will include (1) the upload of a resume and headshot. (2) Two letters of reference (solicited and collected electronically during the application process). (3) A brief statement addressing the applicant's teaching philosophy/philosophy of collaborative work with singers, and motivation for participating in the program. (4) Web links to performance recordings, and (5) web links to video recordings of a sample lesson or coaching.



Applicants must apply online
nats.org

Deadline: Dec. 15, 2021

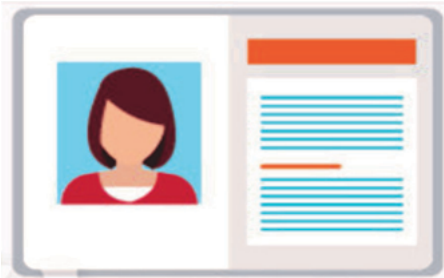


Testimonials from recent interns:

"The most valuable aspects of the program was the time spent with my cohort and master teacher. It was such a variety of experiences and skills that we were all able to learn a great deal from each other."

"It was a wonderful, life-changing experience. Thank you!"

"Just thank you. I feel incredibly grateful and humbled to now include myself among the NATS interns. I learned so much . . . I feel like I am still processing the knowledge gained, and the relationships formed will last a lifetime."



Have you moved, changed your contact information, or your email?

Members: The fall membership renewal period is a good time to update your information on NATS.org. Keeping your contact information up-to-date ensures that you won't miss any of our member benefits or upcoming events.

To make updates, log on to your Member Home Page (your email address for NATS correspondence is your Login). Then, click the "My Profile" link on the right.

You also can call the NATS National Office at 904-992-9101 for assistance.

Let's get social!

Join and follow NATS on social media for the latest updates, videos, and engaging discussions with your fellow members.



2022 Van L. Lawrence Fellowship

Application Deadline: Nov. 15, 2021

The **Van L. Lawrence Fellowship** was created to honor Van L. Lawrence, M.D. for his outstanding contribution to voice, and particularly to recognize the importance of the interdisciplinary education he fostered among laryngologists and singing teachers. The Fellowship is a joint award from the Voice Foundation and the Foundation Heritage Fund of the NATS Endowment.



Candidates for the Van L. Lawrence Fellowship shall be:

1. A member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing who is actively engaged in teaching.
2. The Fellowship shall be awarded to candidates who have demonstrated excellence in their professions as singing teachers, and who have shown interest in and knowledge of voice science.

Members of NATS wishing to apply for the fellowship should write a letter of intent to The Voice Foundation along with your CV — combined into one PDF. Include the area and methods of your proposed study plan. E-mail: office@voicefoundation.org

- a. Current application of scientific knowledge in the studio;
- b. The area of intended study and/or research project **and the study plan and methods**;
- c. How the Fellowship and research project will benefit your teaching;
- d. NATS Chapter to which you belong;
- e. A detailed curriculum vita.

The fellowship will be awarded at the next Symposium: Care of the Professional Voice in 2022 (dates TBD), in Philadelphia

For more information, contact The Voice Foundation at 215-735-7999 or email office@voicefoundation.org. Visit nats.org for complete application instructions.

Foundation
Heritage Fund
of the NATS
Endowment

The TikTok Teacher: Using social media to grow your voice studio

By Cynthia Vaughn

Independent Voices editor Cynthia Vaughn recently interviewed NATS member Phyllis Horridge, who has more than 100,000 followers worldwide and 2.3 million “Likes” on the video sharing social media service TikTok. Known online as Phyllis.Sings “THAT Singing Teacher,” she also is an active influencer on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube. Phyllis.Sings video posts range from #warmupwednesdays to #auditionsongs and popular #teacherreact videos. Through free social media marketing, Horridge has attracted students locally in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and internationally. She has added affiliate teachers to Phyllis & Friends Singing Lessons to meet the demand.

Congratulations on your social media success! This sounds like a lot of fun, but what can a social media presence do for the typical voice teacher?

Phyllis.Sings: Social media offers the independent voice teacher a unique opportunity to identify, pursue, and leverage the growth of your studio. The reality is there are social media influencers in every industry, and this type of FREE marketing can help voice teachers build a larger brand following. That visibility and engagement increase your credibility, and bring in more sales, new leads, and conversions.

In other words, social media presence can help you gain more voice students.

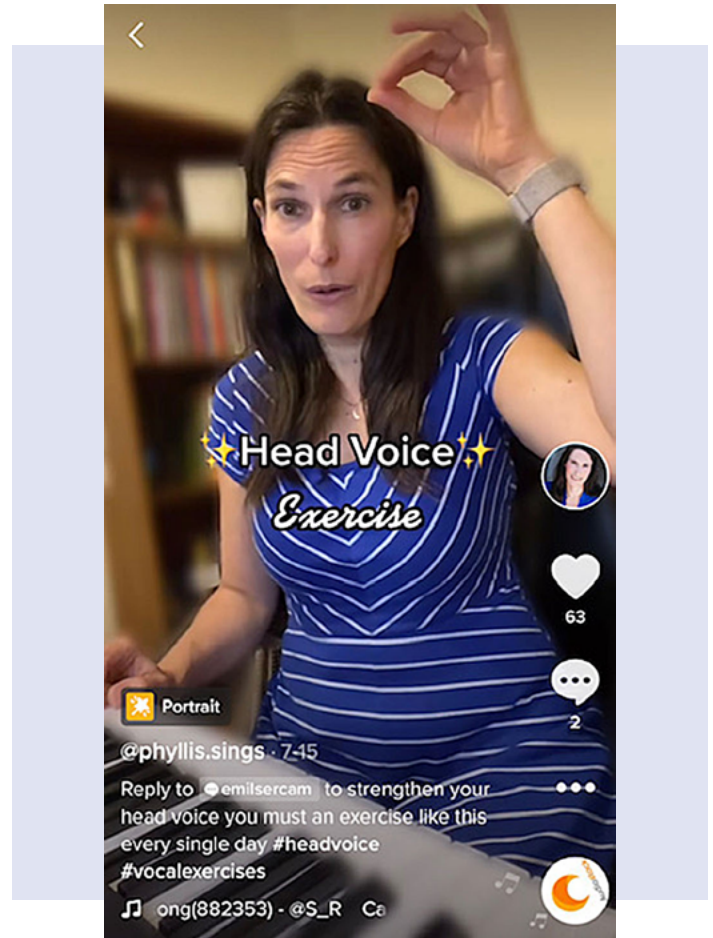
Phyllis.Sings: Exactly! A decade ago, the influencer marketing arena was limited to celebrities. Now, especially since the pandemic, we’ve seen social media on the rise. From Vocal Coach Reacts to “Going Live,” connecting globally has become something more of an interest.

Doesn’t this kind of social media influence take a lot of time and work?

Phyllis.Sings: Yes. Social media marketing can be extremely powerful if done well. But the truth is, building your presence takes patience and determination, and you will have to put in a lot of work before you start to see results.

What suggestions do you have for building a social media presence for your voice studio?

Phyllis.Sings: First, you must choose a very specific “niche.” Are you a holistic voice teacher? Do you teach the pop and rock sound? Do you prefer *bel canto*? The more



Phyllis Horridge on TikTok

specific you can get, the better your reach. Next, I recommend finding the right platform for you.

Who are your ideal clients and where do they hang out? Do your ideal clients hang out on Facebook? Instagram? YouTube?

How do you know which social media platform is the best?

Phyllis.Sings: Who are your ideal clients and where do they hang out? Do your ideal clients hang out on Facebook? Instagram? YouTube? If you are new to social media, it’s

important to pick only one platform to start. After you have built a following there, you can begin to add others. Don't overwhelm yourself!

What next?

Phyllis.Sings: After you define your target audience, you can start developing content for this particular group. It will vary from platform to platform, so try to stay up to date with the things that are relevant on the one you select. For example, Instagram was originally a photo sharing platform, but it has now expanded, and more recently has been pushing for video content to be seen first. This means fewer photos, more video. Following these "trends" will lead to generating traffic and bringing in more audience engagement.

What are some ways that you partner with others in social media?

Phyllis.Sings: In some cases, you may also get the chance to collaborate with influencers and/or create brand partnerships. For example, I have a collaboration with Sheet Music Direct and also Music Notes. Each month they provide me with a discount code that I can share with my followers. Users see the code and share it with others, ultimately helping me gain a stronger following.

That's amazing!

Phyllis.Sings: Remember, this did not happen overnight. I have spent countless months, and in some cases YEARS to gain a good following on each of the platforms I have. Some have a small audience, while others are quite large.

Is it worth the time spent?

Phyllis.Sings: Maybe. Some of my best clients have come directly from finding me on social media. In the past year, I have booked the most clients from my Pinterest. YES, PINTEREST! The next most popular platform my students have found me on is TikTok, where I have over 100K+ followers. These particular clients work with me virtually and come from all over the world. Ultimately being present on social media, whichever platform you choose, can help you grow and thrive in this very large voice community if you are willing to learn and put in the time.

Phyllis Horridge holds a master's degree in music from George Mason University and a bachelor's degree in music with a minor in theatre from Lynchburg College in Virginia. She has been involved in NATS at the local and regional level, and she is a member of the Speakeasy Cooperative for Independent Voice Teachers. Horridge is an award-winning choir director, musical director, and she has served as adjudicator for many events



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phyllissings.com

across the country. After years on the road as a traveling actor, she now calls Louisiana home, where she runs Phyllis & Friends Singing Lessons, a boutique multi-teacher studio that offers singing, acting, and audition prep.

Let's kick shame to the curb:

Encouraging adults to honor their childhood performances

By Dr. Heather Nelson

I love working with adult singers. They are my favorite demographic. There are some challenges that come up, though, so let's talk about them.

Now, if your favorite clients are kids, I would invite you to keep reading a little longer, because the kids you are teaching now are eventually going to be adults, and I think this could be helpful for framing your teaching now.

Adults rarely come in as clean slates when it comes to singing. There are habits, compensations, well-developed skills, and baggage to sift through.

Adults rarely come in as clean slates when it comes to singing. There are habits, compensations, well-developed skills, and baggage to sift through. I have found most often that working with adults is kind of like peeling an onion. Every layer has the potential to be good or rotten. It's part of my job to help my client to examine each layer, keep the good stuff, and replace the things that are no longer serving them. Sometimes that can be as simple as a vocal habit developed over time that would be better replaced with a more reliable and efficient technique. That's often pretty straightforward, and most of the time can be a great source of some quick wins. Quick wins can help develop trust for when the harder stuff comes up later.

That harder stuff is often from the stories the singers tell themselves about their singing, and about who they see themselves to be. In a recent [blog post](#) published on my website, I rant a little about a segment I saw on a talk show that really got my mind churning about how adults can downplay or even ridicule what they did as kids. The host commented on how this particular celebrity got his start as a child star, beginning with some appearances on TV competition shows where he had performed as a dancer. I'm being intentionally vague because my intention is not to call out these particular people, but rather the behavior and the prevailing thought that drove that conversation. The thing that really, really got me thinking was how the host and the celebrity characterized his childhood dancing. The celebrity expressed embarrassment about it, the host was poking fun, and the audience laughed along. I got very annoyed, and even a little angry at that reaction.

There is often a tendency by adults to look back on the things they did as kids taking art, dance, or music lessons, and to be embarrassed by them, or to downplay their importance. We joke about how silly we were, how childish we looked, or how terribly unskilled our performances were.

Please, *please* stop that kind of talk.

I understand that we can have different feelings about what we do as children when we grow up and get a different perspective. I also suffer from a lot of self-imposed face-palming when I think of some of the stuff I did as a kid. We aren't always our most intelligent selves when we are growing up. But please hear me clearly, if we express embarrassment at how we engaged in the arts while growing up, this can leave an incredibly deep impression on the kids in our own lives if they hear us.

I think we need to be very careful about how we speak of our childhood selves, not only because we are speaking ill of our own self, but because most of us have kiddos in our lives that are listening more than we think they are. The words we say matter.

Shame can manifest as tension when we are afraid to really let loose in case we are judged. Trauma can rob us of our breath. Bad memories can keep us from trying new things in case we aren't really in a safe place.

My niece is six years old, and she had her first big dance recital last spring. She worked really hard to prepare, and she did a great job. It was also a delight to see the other dancers performing on a big stage in a historical theater in town. I was so proud of her! One thing I don't want her to ever feel is embarrassment for how she did on stage, or that she was up there at all. But if she hears the adults in her life talking in a self-deprecating way about the dance performances or recitals they did when they were children, she might learn that she should be embarrassed by her dancing. Or she might learn one day that she *should* be embarrassed by her dancing. I hope that never, ever happens.

If you were lucky enough to be able to participate in the arts as a kiddo, whether in school or in extracurricular activities, those experiences have shaped you. I understand that sometimes those experiences can be negative, but you still have nothing to be ashamed of. Kids are kids, and it is normal for them to do things that are age-appropriate for their skill level, and that are fun. It is not okay for adults to shame them for that, even if that adult is you looking back on your childhood self. You did a hard thing, putting yourself on stage as a kid, and that should be celebrated. Your feelings of pride and confidence can encourage the kiddos in your life now to also do the hard thing of performing on stage, and we can teach them to be proud of themselves instead of ashamed.

We aren't (most of us) therapists, and so it is important to remember appropriate boundaries when working with clients.

However, I don't think it will come as any surprise that the emotional and mental connections we have made to our singing can affect our technique. Shame can manifest as tension when we are afraid to really let loose in case we are judged. Trauma can rob us of our breath. Bad memories can keep us from trying new things in case we aren't really in a safe place. It's all connected, and we are working with whole human beings and all the baggage that goes along with that. Being aware of how all that stuff in the past can affect current technique is a good holistic way of teaching voice. It's not easy work all of the time, but it's worth it, and how we view our own past performances could make a *huge* difference in how the kids in your life view their own experiences. If you have trouble changing how you think about things for your own self, do it for the kiddos in your life that don't need any extra shame piled on. The world is hard enough.

For teachers that work primarily with child singers, you have the wonderful privilege and awesome responsibility of writing good things on the hearts of your students now, so that when they get to be adults, they have the memories of what you told



Heather Nelson having fun with adult singers

them in their heads. It's impossible for anyone never to hear anything negative about their singing or about themselves. Humans can be terribly cruel to each other. But if you repeatedly, and I mean *repeatedly*, tell them the truth about their singing, that can create a deep well of truth that they can go back to when they need it. We can teach our kiddos *and* our adults to listen for the positives as they deal with the negative things that come at them. After all, we're not really teaching singing. We're teaching people, using singing as the medium. Let's do our jobs well!

Dr. Heather Nelson, mezzo soprano, loves all the things that have to do with the singing voice and telling other voice teachers about all the neat things she learns. Based in Springfield, MO, she works with voice teachers from all over the world to understand the voice better, and use that knowledge to make a positive difference in their studios. She enjoys cooking (and eating) good food, British TV, and spending time with her favorite dynamic duo, Dooley the dog and Sis the cat. Find more information at www.drheathernelson.com and www.instagram.com/drheathernelson.

Call for Submissions

Short articles on relevant topics are being accepted for inclusion in the independent teacher section of future issues of *Inter Nos*. Submissions should be sent by email to CynthiaVaughn@mac.com.



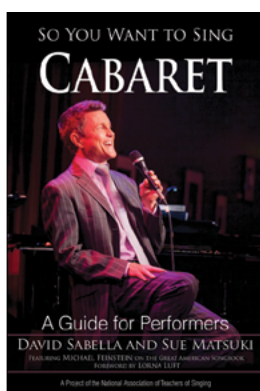
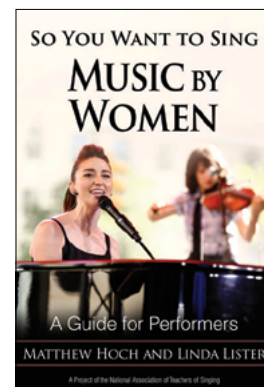
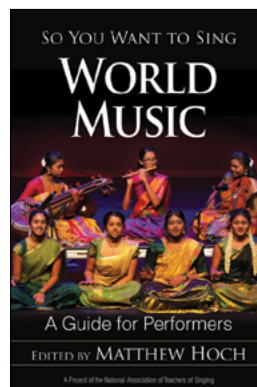
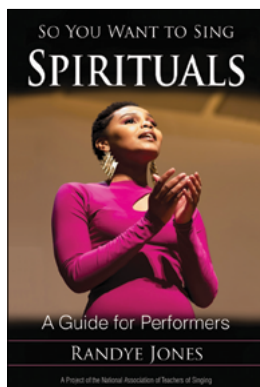
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Executive Editor: Allen Henderson

Series Editor: Matthew Hoch



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There are many perspectives on singing. It can be viewed from points of education, health, arts, and it serves a wide variety of cultural and social functions. At ICVT 2022 we would like to put the emphasis on singing itself. We want to show our admiration and passion for this artistic form of expression. The title of this congress "**For the Sake of Music**" highlights this core idea, which should guide all planning, realization and evaluation.

Vienna, the world "city of music" has been throughout centuries the ideal place for bringing forth exceptional musicians, composers and performing artists. For this reason the world council of ICVT decided unanimously, that EVTA-Austria should organize the 10th ICVT in Austria's capital.

For the ICVT team

Prof. Helga Meyer-Wagner
(President of EVTA-Austria)

Prof. Dr. Martin Vácha
(Chairman of the 10th ICVT)

For more information visit our homepage:

www.icvt2022.com



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Using online platforms to create community in the voice studio: Lessons from the pandemic

By Lynn Eustis, DM

Remote teaching has come a long way since the first panicked days back in March 2020. At the beginning of the pandemic many of us were scrambling to figure out how to move voice lessons to a fully remote format. We found ourselves in Zoom classrooms staring at frightened, displaced students. Eventually we learned how to share files and links in the chat, how to draw using the Whiteboard function, and how to say “You’re on mute” approximately 35 times a day without going insane. By the summer we were all settling into the dreaded new normal: our FaceBook feeds were full of posts about SoundJack, Cleanfeed, open-back headphones, and external microphones. The effectiveness of remote voice lessons and the range of available technologies for studio teaching have been discussed elsewhere. This article will not endeavor to offer technical instruction but rather to suggest ways we might use technology to create community for our students, with a particular focus on the voice studio class.

It seems clear now that some elements of remote teaching will be with us even when we are back in our beloved studio spaces. We are now able to offer lessons to singers in other parts of the country or the world, which greatly expands the possibilities for recruiting prospective students, growing our private studios, and checking in with students who are traveling to sing (when that work eventually resumes). We are also able to invite guest speakers from an unlimited number of locations to work with our students, since there is no need for travel or its associated costs. These practicalities will make our lives easier going forward. Even with the advantages of these technologies, studio class presents its own challenges. It is especially difficult to create a sense of community within our studios when we cannot meet as a class in person.

Online classroom teaching is not new or specific to the pandemic. Many institutions, including music schools, have offered online courses and online degrees for years now. In the wake of the pandemic, there are many articles available about how to move teaching into a remote format without losing the all-important personal connection between teacher and students. But voice studio class is a very different kind of group environment. As I have said in my own books, the singer’s ego is a minefield of potential triggers and sensitivities. When we are speaking with students about their voice, their most personal possession, in front of a group of their peers, we must

tread with immense care and emotional intuition. This becomes even more tricky when the class takes place online.

What are the goals for a studio voice class? Most students mention performance experience as a primary benefit of meeting as a group. They receive feedback on their performances from the group and from the teacher. The class is a chance for them to hear their fellow singers and to be encouraged by following each other’s progress. They can see the technical and musical concepts in motion while not under pressure to perform themselves. The studio class takes an isolated activity and places it in a group setting with singers who are all pursuing a shared approach and/or aesthetic.

How are these goals compromised by the remote environment? The practical concerns are obvious. The absence of an in-person collaborative pianist creates major issues for the singers and for the teacher. When using accompaniment tracks, more time is taken by trying to stop and start. The sound difficulties are legion: the impossibility of speaking simultaneously, the variance in equipment (headphones, microphones), the unreliability of WiFi networks, the tendency for sopranos to exceed the frequency, and many other realities hamper the natural flow of the class.

The pedagogical concerns run even deeper. Instead of breathing properly between phrases, many students find themselves waiting to align with the track. The teacher must try to address this and other problems, often without being able to confirm what is actually happening. It is more difficult for the teacher to read the room in the online classroom: to determine whether the student is receiving the feedback appropriately or to know whether the class as a whole is following the broader concepts. It feels a bit like giving a master class in which you don’t know your audience. Many of us are accustomed to that dynamic but it is unsettling to face it week after week with your own students.

All of these conditions leave the group without the normal sense of community, which is greatly compromised by the inability of the singers to share the same physical space. Online there are no sidebar conversations, no body language to follow, and no conversations that occur organically on the way into or out of the classroom. Why is this a problem? It is a problem for the teacher because it takes longer to develop the trust

that is so critical to the success of the applied voice lessons. That trust is not limited to the teacher-student relationship; it also affects the mutual trust students need in order to feel safe performing for each other. Online, the students are left to wonder what the other students were truly thinking about their work. For new students, it is more difficult to establish friendships within the group. In normal circumstances, the group functions as a safe haven and source of enormous support for singers within the larger program.

Some of the above issues cannot be resolved and must simply be negotiated. In the online environment, the teacher must exhibit patience and skill, and lead the class by positive example. Our students have been traumatized by the loss of their performances, their in-person lessons and auditions, and so many other joys of the singing life. They look to us for positive inspiration, even when that feels impossible to muster. After all, voice teachers have been living through the pandemic as well, and we have suffered many of the same losses. We have missed hearing our students sing in person, we have missed knowing them more fully, and most of all, we have missed celebrating their milestones. Our profession has often been described as a lonely one because we do most of our work apart from our colleagues. The online environment has exacerbated this. For example, we are now completing all of our adjudications alone in our homes instead of sitting at a common table with our colleagues. Going forward, we all hope to be back in the studio and in the studio classroom as soon as possible. In the meantime, there are ways to use online platforms to enhance our teaching and build community within our studios, both now and in the future.

Online platforms can provide a critical supplement to compensate for some of what is lost in person, particularly with regard to community. Most higher education institutions use Blackboard or similar systems for coursework across all disciplines. Prior to the pandemic, many voice teachers did not use these platforms, especially since we do not typically collect assignments or manage large numbers of grades for our applied voice courses. In the shift to remote teaching in March 2020, I attempted to set up a Blackboard course for my students but ultimately felt overwhelmed, and the need to become comfortable with Zoom was more pressing at the



time. Blackboard just didn't feel essential to my work with my studio. After going through my institution's Faculty Coach training, however, I saw that I could mold Blackboard to my own purposes fairly easily.

What is Blackboard? From their company website: "a course management system that allows you to provide content to students in a central location, communicate with students quickly, and provide grades in an electronic format." The original version of Blackboard is mostly applicable to large-format academic courses. The company has developed a simpler, user-friendly version called Blackboard Learn, an interactive learning management system used by higher education, K-12 school, government and military programs, as well as a number of large corporations worldwide. If you are not associated with an institution that holds an account, you can explore free alternatives, including "Experience Blackboard" which offers free access to "Coursesites." This program offers many of the same structural features as Blackboard Learn. The point here is not to recommend a particular platform but rather to suggest that these platforms can be a useful tool in general, no matter which one you choose.

There are many benefits to using an interactive learning management system (LMS). Starting from a practical standpoint, it can serve as a central place for information and announcements of all kinds. You can post your syllabus, your grading rubric, sample repertoire lists and resumes, and

anything else you want the students to be able to access easily. It can provide an easy method for scheduling studio classes and other appointments with students using Google docs or other online sign-up sheets. We have posted these on our studio doors in the past but it is certainly more efficient to give students a remote method, and for us to be able to consult the lists at any time, from anywhere. If you want to collect

(Article continues;
[read more at nats.org](http://nats.org))

Websites:

<http://www.bu.edu/ctl/teaching-remotley-in-the-arts/>

<https://www.smartmusic.com/music-educator-resources/>

Lynn Eustis, soprano, is currently Associate Professor of Voice and Director of Graduate Studies in Music at Boston University, where she joined the faculty in 2012. From 1999–2012 she held the same positions at the University of North Texas. She holds the Doctor of Music degree in opera (Florida State University), the Master of Music degree in opera (The Curtis Institute of Music) and the Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance (Bucknell University, Phi Beta Kappa). Her most recent book, A Singer's Epiphany: Faith, Music, and Mortality, was released by GIA in October 2020.

She appears frequently as a soloist with professional organizations in works such as Mozart's Mass in C-minor, Gloria (Poulenc), Carmina burana, and Knoxville: Summer of 1915. Dr. Eustis has sung over thirty operatic roles, most notably Lucia, Zerbinetta, Olympia, Pamina, Susanna, Rosina, and Gilda. In 2007 she appeared as the title soloist in the U.S. premiere of James Whitbourn's Annelies: The Anne Frank Oratorio, a work for which she continues to be in demand. She has been heard with the Americké Jaro Festival (Czech Republic, eleven seasons) and



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www.northpark.edu/smat/audition



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and Theatre

taught at the Up North Vocal Institute in Michigan (seven seasons).

Dr. Eustis is the author of The Singer's Ego, the Finding Middle Ground series,

and The Teacher's Ego (Chicago: GIA).

A regular guest clinician at the Royal College of Music in London, Dr. Eustis is a native of Long Island, New York.



2021-2022 SEASON

7-8 P.M. ET

(6-7 P.M. CT; 5-6 P.M. MT; 4-5 P.M. PT)

Season presented by Inside View Press

NATS Chat invites participants to network and discuss various topics in an online webinar. Sessions are often held the second Sunday of each month of the academic year. The host and coordinator for NATS Chat is Kari Ragan.



OCTOBER NATS CHAT

Topic: Know Better, Do Better: What Vocal Instructors and Choir Directors Need to Know and Do to Be on the Same Page

Guests: Lynne Gackle, Hilary Apfelstadt, Geoffrey Boers, John Nix, and Allen Henderson

Date: Sunday, October 10, 2021 at 7 p.m. ET

There is an imperative conversation about the necessity for ongoing discussion between choral directors and voice teachers that this NATS Chat webinar will initiate. The National Association of Teachers of Singing wants to encourage an open, productive, respectful, and collegial communication and relationship between the choral and voice teaching community. We can KNOW a lot, but unless we can communicate and collaborate, we will never truly be on the same page. Esteemed guests from both the choral and voice teaching fields will endeavor to find ways facilitate that end during our discussion. *The October NATS Chat is sponsored in part by the National Opera Association.*

NOVEMBER NATS CHAT

Topic: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the Voice Studio: Cultivating Brave Spaces

Guests: Nathon De'Shon Myers, Lili Guerero, and Albert Lee

Date: Sunday, November 14, 2021 at 7 p.m. ET

NATS has prioritized moving forward with DEI initiatives within the organization and encourages every voice teacher to do the same. How can teachers use the new DEI Toolkit to cultivate a welcoming environment for students of all backgrounds? DEI work extends beyond assigning repertoire by underrepresented composers. This NATS Chat will focus on providing instructors with actionable steps to fostering a more accessible voice studio.

DECEMBER NATS CHAT

Topic: Registration — The Snake Pit of Voice Pedagogy

Guests: Jan Svec, Christian Herbst

Cohost: John Nix

Date: Sunday, December 12, 2021 at 7 p.m. ET

A conversation about registration amongst voice teachers facilitates a lively, sometimes frustrating, always enriching discussion. Although research is ongoing, voice science has shed a great deal of light on this topic over the past few decades. In the 21st century, what is it that voice teachers need to know about registration in order to inform their choice of terminology

and application in the studio setting? This NATS Chat will discuss the latest research on registration with two of the leading voice scientists so that voice teachers may confidently move forward in their teaching. *Co-hosted by The Voice Foundation.*

JANUARY NATS CHAT

Topic: Contemporary Vocal Styles: Demystifying the Pedagogical Process Specifically for Pop/Rock

Guests: Elizabeth Benson, Melissa Foster, and Justin Moniz,

Date: Sunday, January 16, 2022 at 7 p.m. ET

The National Association of Teachers of Singing has invested a great deal in providing opportunities for continuing education in teaching contemporary commercial styles such as pop, rock, and musical theatre. But where are we now in the field of voice teaching? How are pop/rock styles being taught in collegiate musical theatre programs and independent studios? How do we build vocal authenticity and sustainability in pop/rock styles? Are we serving the needs of singers beyond musical theatre in a stylistically and pedagogically accurate way? Please join us for a lively discussion on this important topic.

FEBRUARY NATS CHAT

Topic: Voice Studio Shenanigans

Guests: Shannon Coates and Nikki Loney

Date: Sunday, February 6, 2022 at 7 p.m. ET

Using play, exploration, and improvisation to build confidence and independent singing skills in children and adolescents ... and maybe even in adult singers, too.

MARCH NATS CHAT

Topic: Music Performance Anxiety (MPA): What Voice Teachers and Singers Need to Know

Guests: Yvette Litchfield, MCouns, GradDipMentalHlthPrac, MM, GradDipMus, BA, and Jon Skidmore, Psy.D

Date: Sunday, March 13, 2022 at 7 p.m. ET

Singers spend years training to become vocally proficient in order to present artistic performances. However, what happens when they are plagued by performance anxiety due to a variety of circumstances? What do voice teachers need to know to help singers develop a powerful mindset for peak performance? Join us for a conversation about optimizing these skills in our singers.

See nats.org for April and May

Trauma-Informed Voice Pedagogy

A Report from the Front Lines

By Rebecca Fromherz-Kenneke, MEd

"Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are now written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

—Rainer Maria Rilke

I cannot believe I am here: losing it, crying into a mic, telling my story full of questions, disbelief, anger and pain. I am standing in front of three cohorts of fellow doctoral candidates and all my professors in a huge conference room, with a simultaneous panel of experts in education from all around the world on Zoom. I am shaking. I am falling apart. I am living my truth, and I am asking "Why?"

George Fox University, where I pursue a Doctorate in Educational Leadership, chose "Self-care for the Educator" as the topic of our 2021 summer scholar/practitioner colloquium. This is a cutting-edge discussion in a field with a shockingly high attrition rate in first- to third-year teachers. We ask: how can we give ourselves fully to teaching, but not be literally consumed by our work? We discover deep truths about our calling to teach in a world that makes it harder and harder to feel we are following the call. It is liberating to explore answers to real and deep questions. I feel seen and heard, and I am testing the strength of the acceptance and challenge I feel from this doctoral program by throwing my whole life at the system, to see if it can handle my story. I need to know if I am safe. My breakdown, in front of everyone, is an honest, raw, cry from the soul. Not to my surprise, the room full of trauma-informed educators, and the panel dedicated to self-care, handles my story with grace, gentleness, academic prowess and, most importantly, mindfulness.

By the time I am done, everyone knows I had a hell of a year. Barely two months after lockdown began, my husband, Jon, could not get out of bed. That began a 21-day slide into his transition from this life. It was unexpected, heartbreaking. We didn't have our honeymoon. It was scheduled for the month he died.

Jon did not have a will. I lose the home we had lived in together, and the life we had started to build, including a new voice studio in a beautiful, dream Victorian parlor. I lose a step-daughter, and in Jon, an unconditional lover, an advocate and protector. I leave the community we shared, finding a soft, sad landing; coming full circle, at a small cottage in a forest where I was brought home as a baby, on my parents' property. I heal a little, in this unexpected place, and with time I am able to look at my life with the unflinching eyes of deep grief.

Three days after Jon dies, George Fox University admissions calls to ask if I would start my doctoral program. I deferred the year before because we wanted to enjoy our first married year together. I know I need an anchor to the present as I come down from shock. I begin my studies with a broken heart, a numb body, and a fuzzy mind. I do it because Jon's spirit tells me to believe in my voice and myself, regardless of how they manifest.

I take enticing courses: philosophy and ethics, leadership and purpose. I wake up, little-by-little, with the help of caring colleagues and big-hearted, inquiring, and compassionate professors. My teaching, also an anchor in the turmoil, is going well. In many ways, my private students say, our work is more focused than ever. It is like "there is no filter; losing Jon has made everything more real."

I heal from losing Jon like peeling an onion, in layers. We can't have a funeral, so we have Zoom remembrances and I attend his cremation in person with my pastor, who is also my boss at my church choir gig. During covid lockdown, two people are allowed in the crematorium with the technician and the body. I sing Strauss' *Zueignung*, a cappella. Jon especially loves when I sing in German. I start referring to him in the present. So many things about him are still alive to me. I remember my singing teachers telling me there are some songs we keep learning the meaning of, over and over, as we live life. I thank God, as I watch Jon's earthly body turn to dust, I've chosen a path of voice that encompasses all of life's experiences.

Not long after the cremation, I take a course on race, class and equity in education. Jon died just four days before George Floyd was killed. I am aware, through my own fog of loss, that the world is going through its greater turmoil, and my tornado of pain feels perfectly in tune with the simultaneous pandemics of covid and social injustices. I am struck with a

reality that's tickled the back of my mind and plagued my heart for years: private voice teaching is not equitable. If Jon and I disagree about anything in our first year of marriage, it is about my teaching free classes to anyone who wanted to sing, along with my paying students. "It's unsustainable" Jon says. My heart wants to give voice to everyone who wants it. So I pull myself up by my bootstraps and write a grant to teach singers from my area school district, one without a music program, with a formal food insecurity level of 40%, but according to teachers here, in reality closer to 60%, this summer. I'm serving singers who might not otherwise have the means, and I'm also meeting my needs.



Stripped raw by grief and loss, yet fueled by new clarity of conviction, my life completely shifts again. I choose to add another Masters degree to my Doctorate, and start a path to become certified to teach K-12 music. This way, I can continue to answer my heart to teach all school students for whom music is a language, and have the benefit of a steady income. I discover my true *"why"* we are taught to identify in our teaching: I teach voice, and music, for equity.

This is not the life I dreamed of as a young student. My plan at first was to be a "great singer." As this youngster, I wanted a career, and I had one. When I reach a point where I think "I arrived," with agents in Europe and more and more frequent gigs, I feel progressively more empty. A singing career is not all I want.

When I meet Jon, I know a life with him, a life of love, peace and mutual support, is all I want. I never think I'd marry—I feel I'm too broken. Yet here's this man who sweeps me off my feet. He's a rock. He lets me take pressure off my private teaching. He lets me relax into the relationship. He is my safety.

Going to school in my early 40s, with all the implications of study at this time of life, my classes tend to burrow deep under my skin. A trauma-informed education course gets me thinking about how and why safety has been so important to me as a singer, as a learner, and as a human being. My singing teachers, diva warriors each of them, taught, and still teach me, via my memory and countless recorded lessons, to create safety for my singing heart. Jon teaches me to be safe in my body. When he dies, I realize I've lost my crutch, my helper on my way to

full embodiment. I have to look at the truth of my story more deeply so I can find a foundation in life that's mine to stand on, fully integrated, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. I have to know how to stand alone on this Earth; Jon's gone—at least, in body.

The language of trauma-informed education brings back the main, ever-present thread of my path to voice: learning, through mindfulness and compassion, to be fully embodied and present, even, and especially, when things get tough. What I had not acknowledged back in the days when I sang in Europe, not having the language to articulate it, is that I was fully dissociated for much of my life. My childhood, adolescence, undergrad years, and even the beginning of my singing career, I spent about two feet above my right shoulder. At 27, I had fleeting experiences, brought on my severe panic attacks, of full embodiment. I did not give this the weight and importance then, which I do now. I did not know, in living dissociated and subsequently coming back home to my body, that I experienced something noteworthy. At the time, my coming home to my body felt like a side-effect to finding voice. Now, I know it was much closer to "the main event." Or, maybe, finding voice and finding my body were and are one and the same. I did not know how my own experiences living out of, and then learning to live in, my body, would cause me to be a more trauma-informed singing teacher and person.

(Article continues;
[read more at nats.org](https://nats.org))



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National Association of Teachers of Singing



ADVANCING QUALITY
VOCAL LITERATURE
BY PROMOTING NEW
WORKS FOR SINGERS

REQUIREMENTS - The work must be:

- (1) a song cycle, group of songs, or extended song between 13 and 25 minutes in length. Genres other than the classical “art song” are discouraged.
- (2) composed for single voice and single acoustic instrument (solo instruments other than piano as the collaborative instrument will be accepted).
- (3) English (or English translation), either in the public domain* or for which the composer has secured appropriate permission.
- (4) composed within the past 2 years (after January 1, 2020).

ENTRY FEE - \$30 for professionals; \$15 for full-time students each entry (payable in U.S. funds to NATS).

ENTRY DATES - June 1, 2021 through December 1, 2021.

ELIGIBILITY - Open to anyone meeting prescribed requirements.

PROCEDURE - All applications must be submitted electronically via www.nats.org. Please read the complete details posted on the NATS website. The following are required materials for entry:

- (1) A PDF copy of the song score(s). Copies must be legible and should include composition title; poet’s (or poets’) name(s); public domain status or information regarding permission; length and date of composition. **THE COMPOSER’S NAME MUST NOT APPEAR ANYWHERE ON THE SCORE.**
- (2) Digital audio file(s) of the composition(s).
- (3) Recordings must be of the highest quality possible (performance or working).
- (4) The title of the composition should be the only labeling on the recording(s).
- (5) The song order on the recordings must match the song order of the scores.

1ST PLACE

\$2,000

PLUS the composer’s expenses to the NATS 57th National Conference in Chicago, IL, July 2–6, 2022, where the performance of the winning composition will be given.

2ND PLACE

\$1,000

**Cash prizes generously sponsored
by composer Lori Laitman**

NATS reserves a non-exclusive right to sponsor performances of the winning work for two years without additional remuneration to the composer.

** For U.S. publications, a summary of works in the public domain is available on NATS.org.*

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 1, 2021
APPLY ONLINE AND VIEW COMPLETE DETAILS AT NATS.ORG

NATS welcomes new Region Governors for 2021–2022

The National Association of Teachers of Singing installed new Region Governors for the 2021–22 term during the organization's annual board of directors meeting in Jacksonville, Florida, this past June. Congratulations to the four newly elected NATS Region Governors! Cynthia Vaughn (Intermountain), Kimberly Broadwater (Southern), Melinda Brou

(Texoma), and Sarah Holman (International) have each begun a two-year term as of July 1.

We look forward to their continued contributions to the work of NATS in each of these regions, and extend our sincere gratitude to the preceding governors. View the NATS Board of Director page.

2021-2022 NATS Board of Directors



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2021-2022 NATS Regional Governors



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Other Appointed NATS Officials



Martin Keenze
International
Coordinator



Richard Sjoerdsma
Journal of Singing
Editor-in-Chief

Report of the Nominating Committee, as Approved by the NATS Board of Directors

Nominating Committee Members:

Karen Brunssen, Chair, Richard Weidlich, Julie Krugman, Albert Lee, Dana Lentini, Yonne Redman, Mark Kano, Dan Hunter-Holly are submitting the following names (the slate) for election to the term of office for 2022–2024. The slate was approved by the NATS Board of Directors on June 18, 2021.

The National Bylaws state in ARTICLE X, Section 2. Election:

a. The Association Nominating Committee shall submit a slate of candidates for Association officers to the Board for approval one year prior to the beginning of the terms of the offices up for election. The slate of candidates, the date of distribution of the ballots, and the deadline for the return of ballots for the election shall be published in Inter Nos and NATS Online in the fall following the Board's approval of the slate. There shall be a

ninety-day interval between the publishing of the slate and the deadline for the return of the ballots.

b. Election of Association officers shall be by poll of the membership. Following the close of nominations, a full roster of duly nominated candidates shall be distributed to all voting members with a non-identifiable return ballot. The ballot will state the deadline for returning the ballot to the Secretary/Treasurer. Three Members appointed by the Secretary/Treasurer will count the ballots. No candidate may serve on the counting committee. A majority of all votes cast is necessary for election and those elected shall take office effective at the end of the national conference, or another time as determined by the Board from time to time.

Each current NATS voting member will receive a ballot from the Executive Office in October 2021 with a deadline of Jan. 5, 2022.

Nominations for National Office (Term of office for 2022–2024)

■ President-Elect: Alexis Davis-Hazell

American mezzo-soprano **Alexis Davis-Hazell** is a clinician, presenter and singing actor of opera, concert and musical theatre repertoire in the Southeast United States. Her performances have earned accolades for the size and quality of her instrument, and the dramatic intensity she brings to supporting characters.



Among the highlights of her singing career are the more than one hundred and thirty performances of The Gershwins' masterwork Porgy and Bess in numerous productions, including those produced on the eight-show per week musical theater-touring model. She gained an invaluable cultural and professional education singing the roles of Maria, Lily and Strawberry Woman as a principal and ensemble swing in opera houses throughout Germany, Russia, Poland, Greece, Latvia, Switzerland and North America. These performances include critically acclaimed productions at the Dresden SemperOper, Deutsche Oper am Rhein in

Dusseldorf, Hamburgische Staatsoper, the Baden-Baden Festspielhaus, the Mikhailovsky Opera in St. Petersburg, the Moscow Philharmonic, the Polish National Opera of Warsaw, the Kuressaare Operadays Festival in Estonia, and the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. Along with the celebrated production of Porgy and Bess at San Francisco Opera, she performed in their seminal production of Show Boat—both directed by Francesca Zambello, conducted by John de Main and shown in HD cinema release, marketed internationally on DVD and shown nationally on PBS.

She continues to perform a diverse repertoire and relishes the opportunity to sing contemporary works. Alexis originated the role of Rachel in the world premiere of Joseph Landers' opera Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, with the Tuscaloosa Symphony in partnership with The University of Alabama Opera Theatre, broadcast on Alabama public television in September 2020. She also co-presents concerts blending classic and contemporary music, through production company Jazzoperetry, Inc. co-founded with her husband, Earl Hazell. Under their auspices, Alexis was headline artist presenting the first full concert of African American spirituals and gospel

music at the Alfonso Ortiz Tirado Opera Festival in Álamos, Sonora, Mexico broadcast live by Radio Sonora on XHMOS 104.1 FM and video internet stream. Recent mainstage appearances include Mississippi Opera's Shattering the Glass and The Hilarious World of Gilbert and Sullivan, and Cincinnati Opera's productions of Porgy and Bess and Carmen.

She has served in leadership positions at chapter and regional levels for the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) since joining in 2010. In the Phoenix metro area, Alexis served as Chapter Vice-President of Programs and Fall Workshop Chair (2011–2013), Chapter President and Student Auditions Co-chair (2013–2016), Chapter Executive Board Advisor and Fall Workshop Chair (2016–2018) and as a representative on regional nominating committees. Alexis attended her first NATS National Conference in 2014, made possible in part by travel funds provided by the NATS Emerging Leader Award, and an additional Presidential service award from the Valley of the Sun NATS Chapter. She was selected as a solo session presenter for the 55th biennial conference in 2018 (Acknowledging the history of Blackface Minstrelsy and its Persisting Legacy in Performing Arts Practice) and was privileged to be selected as a co-presenter for the 2020 Virtual Conference (My Sister's Keeper: A performance panel highlighting art songs by African American women composers). Alexis was a featured guest artist, masterclass clinician, and session presenter at

the 2019 Cal-Western Regional Conference, instructing and demonstrating strategies for stylistic versatility and same-day multi-genre performance. She began service on the NATS National Membership Committee in 2016 and continues to coordinate the annual compilation and editing of best practices, policies, and leadership responsibilities in the NATS Member Recruitment & Retention Guide. In addition to this work, Alexis currently serves Southeastern Region NATS as Executive Board Secretary and serves on the American Negro Spiritual Category Official Repertoire Committee, the National Bylaws committee, and the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce.

Dr. Davis-Hazell currently serves on the faculty of The University of Alabama School of Music as Assistant Professor of Voice and Lyric Diction and as a College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Board Faculty Fellow. She is a serial collaborator across disciplines and her research interests include: the impact of performing arts training on well-being for Alabama youth, the legacy of Blackface Minstrelsy in contemporary voice performance practice, promotion of vocal repertoire by African American women composers, and advocacy for Russian art song studies through improvement of curricula for lyric diction pedagogy. She holds degrees in Vocal Performance from Temple University (B.M. Hons.) and Arizona State University (M.M., D.M.A.)

■ Secretary/Treasurer: Randy Umstead

Randall Umstead currently serves as Herring Professor and Chair of the Department of Music at Furman University after 15 years on the faculty of the Baylor University School of Music. Randall spent the final four of those years having served as Professor of Voice and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, after serving six years as Director of Vocal Studies. During his time at Baylor, he served as a full, voting faculty member on Baylor's Board of Regents and as chair of the Faculty Senate.

Randall also served two terms as governor of the Texoma Region of NATS. As such, he also spent four years on the board of the association. He is a former NATS Intern, Texoma Region Treasurer/Registrar, and Dallas-Ft. Worth Chapter President.

As a performer, Randall was twice a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. He has performed as a soloist with Bach Society Houston, Dallas Bach Society, Johannesburg Festival Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Flagstaff Symphony, Colorado

Bach Ensemble, Cincinnati Baroque Orchestra, Catacoustic Consort, Richmond Symphony Orchestra, the Kwazulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Irving Symphony, and the Bach Society of Dayton.

Randall's students have gone onto successful careers as musicians and educators, and they have been accepted into prestigious graduate programs, including the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Indiana University, the Yale University School of Music, and the University of Michigan. He holds the BM from Oklahoma Baptist University, and the MM and DMA from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.



■ Vice President for Auditions: Alisa Belflower

Alisa Belflower joined the Korff School of Music's faculty and the Carson School of Theatre and Film's faculty at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 2000. She teaches voice and acting as well as serving as musical director, coach, or staging director for UNL productions. Alisa also works as an Associate Producer in Development with the Lied Center for Performing Arts. As an advocate of new works, she directs developmental staged readings with renowned guest composers-in-residence and is a resident stage director in ASCAP's New Musical Theatre Workshop. Having presented her research and performed internationally, Alisa is currently in her second term as the West Central NATS Region's Governor and is a member of NATS NSA Committee. Her students have won international awards for their performances of opera, art song, and musical theatre including national awards won in

NATS student and young artist competitions among others. Her former students have performed on Broadway, Off-Broadway, the West End, on television, in film, in national tours, and in regional professional opera and theatre companies. An award-winning professor and director, Alisa holds bachelor's degrees in music and French from Furman University. After an opera apprenticeship in Paris, France, she completed her master's degree and doctoral studies at the University of South Carolina.



■ Vice President for Outreach: Nicholas Perna

Dr. Nicholas Perna is Associate Professor of Voice and Voice Pedagogy at Mississippi College. He is a Presser Music Foundation awardee and currently a voice research associate at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. His primary research areas are Laryngeal Manipulation and Singing Voice Acoustics. Perna has presented research on three continents at notable events such as the International Congress of Voice Teachers, the Voice Foundation's Annual Symposium on the Care of the Professional Voice, and the NATS National Conference. Publications include articles in *Journal of Singing*, *Journal of Voice*, and *VOICEprints*. He has served on the faculty of Donald



G. Miller's Singing Voice Science Workshop, and the New England Conservatory Acoustic Vocal Pedagogy Workshop. He is the creator and co-host of the VocalFri Podcast, <http://www.vocalfri.com>. Your weekly dash of voice science, pedagogy, and nerd pop culture.

Perna was a recent finalist for the American Prize for men in opera and has appeared multiple times in recent seasons with Opera Mississippi in leading roles. Perna was twice selected as a Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Artist singer. Additional Operatic credits include *Rodolfo*, *The Duke*, *Nemorino*, *Alfred*, & *Tamino*. Symphonic appearances include Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, Beethoven's *Symphony no. 9*, *Messiah*, & *Carmina Burana*. Along with Dr. Mandy Spivak, they created *The Comprehensive Britten Song Database*. <http://www.brittensongdatabase.com>. An open source guide to Britten's song output. Perna holds graduate degrees from the University of Miami & the University of Houston.

■ Vice President for Membership: Torin Chiles (second term)

Torin Chiles' active performance career as an operatic tenor has spanned 20 years and his resume is replete with engagements from North American symphonies and opera companies. Mr. Chiles appeared on CBC television's *Opening Night* as McAlpine in the critically acclaimed new Canadian opera, *Filumena* which was performed in Calgary, Banff, Ottawa, and Edmonton. Many live operatic performances have been featured on CBC Radio Two's *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*. Mr. Chiles' credits include *Pinkerton* and *Count Almaviva* for Opera Lyra at the National Arts Centre; *MacDuff* for the

Manitoba Opera in Winnipeg; Pang for Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton, and Arizona; Bob Boles in Montreal; *The Magician in The Consul* for Montreal, Manitoba and Milwaukee. Mr. Chiles has premiered many new Canadian works such as *Filumena* by John Estacio, *Erewhon* by Louis Applebaum, *Taptoo* by John



Beckwith, and *The Lady with the Lamp* by Timothy Sullivan. A Gilbert and Sullivan Gala with the Winnipeg Symphony under maestro Bramwell Tovey was recorded for the CBC SM5000 series and is available commercially.

Torin Chiles began teaching part time at Western University Canada in 1999. In 2004 he was appointed to the Don Wright Faculty full time and served as the Voice Division Coordinator at the DWFoM from 2006 to 2011 and again from 2016 to the present. Mr. Chiles has taught undergraduate and graduate vocal pedagogy courses at Western since 2004 and is in ever-

increasing demand as a clinician, adjudicator, and examiner. Recent seminars have been presented to the Schulich Faculty of Medicine at Western; the Alberta Music Educators Association, NATS Ontario (National Association of Teachers of Singing) and Conservatory Canada.

A NATS member since 1999, Torin Chiles is a past president of NATS Ontario, past District Governor. In addition to having served on the strategic planning committee at the national level and he currently serves on the NATS Foundation board of directors as well as VP-Membership on the national NATS board.

■ Vice President for Workshops: DeMar Neal (second term)

DeMar Austin Neal, IV is a critically acclaimed performer and educator currently based in Raleigh, North Carolina.

DeMar enjoys a diverse performance career, with engagements in opera, operetta, music theater, concert, and choral organizations across the United States and abroad. He has performed as a soloist with the North Carolina Opera, GLOW Lyric Theatre, the Prizery Theatre, the Raleigh Symphony Orchestra, and the Tiber Sinfonia Festival among others. His favorite roles include Papageno, Junius, Ko-Ko, the Modern Major General, and King Herod. He can also be seen on the 10th Anniversary Season of NBC's *America's Got Talent* as part of the classical quartet, VOX.

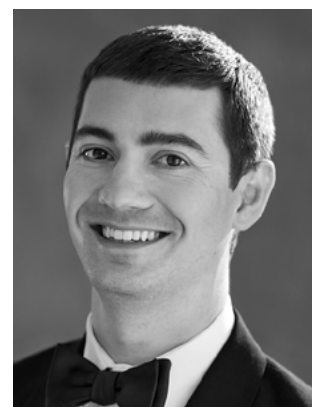
As an educator and researcher, DeMar serves a variety of needs. He currently works as an Associate Professor at Wake Technical Community College, where his courses range from music appreciation to jazz and chorus. He also holds positions at Meredith College and North Carolina State University, where he teaches both private voice and lecture-based classes. He has presented his doctoral treatise, *The Song Cycles for Baritone and Piano* by Jake Heggie, in conference and his current research efforts focus on vocal jury assessment

practices across higher education institutions in the United States.

DeMar holds degrees in vocal performance from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Boston Conservatory, and the Florida State University. He also holds a specialist certification in Vocology from the National Center for Voice and Speech through the University of Utah as well as in Commercial Contemporary Music Vocal Pedagogy from Shenandoah Conservatory.

As a member of the NATS Board of Directors, he is completing his first term as the National Vice President for Workshops, with events focusing on self-care during COVID 19, repertoire diversity, and stylistic matters in performance practice. Previously he served on the North Carolina NATS board within the Mid-Atlantic Region, with two-year terms as Secretary, Vice-President, President, and District Governor.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.demarNeal.com/>



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 Dianne Wintrob, Giving Tuesday—NSA
 Fund
 Joyce Hall Wolf, In Memory of Frances
 Yeend
 Linda Young
 Kurt-Alexander Zeller, Bill Vessels
 Endowment
 Natalia Zuk

2020 Fiscal Year Audit Summary

The 2020 audit of the National Association of Teachers of Singing has been completed and published copies of the report were furnished to members of the Board of Directors by the independent auditing firm of Magers & Associates, LLC, Certified Public Accountants, Jacksonville, Florida. The entire unqualified report and opinion letter of the auditor is available for members to review in the Executive Office of NATS in Jacksonville, Florida, as well as from members of the Board of Directors. The following summary of the details of the audit are extracted and summarized below. The auditor's report and the notes that accompanied the report are an integral part of the audit statements.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION Years Ended December 31, 2020 and December 31, 2019

ASSETS		
	December 31	
Current Funds—Unrestricted	2020	2019
Account Receivable	32,736.00	21,891.00
Cash in Banks	839,543.00	378,873.00
Cash Restricted	25,000.00	0.00
Investments	270,234.00	252,065.00
Publication Inventory	15,000.00	15,000.00
Prepaid Expense	23,232.00	46,368.00
Other Assets	378.00	634.00
Total Current Assets	1,206,122.00	714,830.00
FIXED ASSETS – NET	227,853.00	236,296.00
TOTAL ASSETS – UNRESTRICTED	\$1,433,975.00	\$951,126.00
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE		
Liabilities	2020	2019
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	64,863.00	70,261.00
Deferred Revenue	32,726.00	84,914.00
Prepayment of Dues	424,773.00	379,282.00
Current Portion of long-term Debt	25,163.00	23,075.00
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	547,525.00	557,532.00
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES		
PPP Loan	71,494.00	
EIDL Loan	100,100.00	
Notes Payable less Current Portion	21,785.00	46,996.00
TOTAL LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	193,379.00	46,996.00
NET ASSETS		
Net assets with donor restrictions	25,000.00	
Net assets without donor restrictions	668,071.00	346,598.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$1,433,975.00	\$951,126.00

Why Give To NATS?

Giving to NATS is rising. In fact, charitable dollars donated to NATS is up 33% in 2021 and the number of donors is up 25%.

Those statistics, however, do not address the question of why someone would give. One reason is that NATS represents the interests and the viewpoint of voice professionals and supporters of the vocal arts. Providing NATS with additional resources to advance the profession and provide a better experience for both teachers and students is no small matter.

NATS Development Director, Bob Bryan, thinks that NATS should make its case for vocal education to a wider audience.

"Our members have a vast network of arts patrons and friends who can help us advance the art of singing," says Bryan. "Development at NATS means finding a way to reach that network."

One way to reach that network is to get more NATS members talking about development, and so Bryan and the NATS Advancement Committee have established some new national volunteer positions.

"We want NATS development to be focused on chapters' agendas," says Kari Ragan, Advancement Committee Chair. "We have created a development committee to facilitate chapter involvement, and we have also created Region Development Liaisons to start the conversations we need to have about what opportunities members and students could make possible through fundraising."



Want to discuss giving to NATS?
Contact Development Director [Bob Bryan](#).



Several Regions provided funding for students to participate in the National Student Auditions.

One new reason to give to NATS is a National Student Auditions Scholarship Endowment. The Endowment will provide grants to students to participate in the National Student Auditions at all levels.

"When we have asked members that question, 'why give to NATS,' access to the NSA for students who can't afford the entry fees or the travel costs is the most frequent answer," says Bryan. "We are setting up a way to provide that access."

The new Scholarship Endowment will be featured during Giving Tuesday this November and also highlighted as a giving opportunity during the NATS membership renewal process. In addition to national scholarships, chapters and regions can set up funds within the endowment to support their own students specifically.

Ragan points out that often members are paying for their students who cannot afford the auditions, and hopes chapters will see fundraising as a better, more systematic way to solve the problem of affordability and inclusivity.

"We hope chapters will set up their own scholarship programs and use the national resources to make it easy," says Ragan. "If we get everyone talking about this and sharing creative ideas, I believe we will figure out how to fundamentally change the program in a way that lifts up our students and gives value to our members."

Encore! Society

Have you considered leaving a legacy gift to NATS?

Your passion for singing and your belief in the mission of the National Association of Teachers of Singing can change the future. It might be scholarships for future NATS students. It could be helping to advance the careers of young vocal teachers. Maybe it is funding an endowment that permanently supports the program you value most. Making a legacy gift to NATS strengthens the profession in a lasting way.

A legacy gift to NATS makes you a member of the Encore! Society, created to recognize donors who have made a long-term commitment to NATS' mission through estate gifts.

Encore! Society member benefits:

- Knowing your values will be carried forward by NATS
- Name recognition, with permission, in the NATS annual reports and on the NATS website
- The opportunity to name a scholarship or prize
- Invitations to NATS donor appreciation reception at the National Conference
- Updates on NATS programs and activities

For many individuals, the bulk of our wealth is held in our estate – our retirement plan, property, life insurance, etc. This means that legacy giving might be the most impactful gift we will ever make.

There are many good ways to be generous to NATS, now and in the future. Here are some of the favorite ways our members have made contributions. If you want to discuss any of these options, contact Bob Bryan, NATS Development Director, at 904-992-9101. You also should consult your financial advisor.

■ GIFTS IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

A single sentence in these documents is all that is needed to complete your gift to NATS. You may give a specific amount, a specific item, a percentage of your estate, or the remainder of your estate after specific bequests to family, friends, and other charities are met.

Here is an example:

I give to the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Inc., a nonprofit institution incorporated in the State of Florida with a business address of 9957 Moorings Drive, Suite 401, Jacksonville, FL 32257-2416 and a tax identification number 36-6118354, the sum of \$_____ (or _____% of my estate) to be used in support of its general charitable purposes."

If you want to discuss any of these options, contact Bob Bryan, NATS Development Director, at 904-992-9101.

■ LIFE INSURANCE POLICY

You can name NATS as the owner and beneficiary of a new or existing life insurance policy. A gift of life insurance is separate from your estate and has no effect on its assets. Please consult a financial advisor or lawyer for more information.

■ BANK AND BROKERAGE ACCOUNTS

Most states allow you to designate a beneficiary for these accounts through a payable or transfer-on-death (TOD) designation.

■ LIFE INCOME PLANS

There are several charitable gift arrangements that pay you income during your lifetime and benefit charity. These include the Charitable Gift Annuity, Deferred Charitable Gift Annuity, Charitable Remainder Trust, and Charitable Lead Trust. Your financial advisor can help you decide if this is right for you.