

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* TEACHERS *of* SINGING



Karen Brunssen

THE KAREN BRUNSSSEN FUND

PROVIDES FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL STUDENT AUDITIONS

The National Association of Teacher of Singing is proud to announce plans to permanently establish the Karen Brunssen Award in the Classical categories of the National Student Auditions.

Karen is also the recipient of the 2024 NATS IMPACT Award

Professor Brunssen's remarkable service to NATS includes many initiatives while NATS President that included a focus on international connectivity and her pivotal work in shaping our first strategic plan. She has also served as Vice President of the Chicago NATS Chapter, Program Chair for the 2016 National Conference, a Master Teacher in the Intern Program, Central Region Governor, Director of the NATS Intern Program for two years as Past-President, and currently serves as the chair of the NATS Advancement Committee.

"Karen has earned our deep admiration both as a colleague and a professional. Karen holds the position of Professor of Voice and Opera and serves as Co-chair of the Department of Music Performance at the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University. She is also the author of 'The Evolving Singing Voice: Changes Across the Lifespan' and is a member of the American Academy of Teachers of Singing. More than the titles Karen has held, it is her serving spirit—her optimism, unflagging enthusiasm, magnetism, and her exceptional leadership that we all deeply appreciate." - Diana Allen, President, NATS

In recognition of Professor Brunssen's profound impact, NATS is embarking on a fundraising initiative to create the Karen Brunssen Endowment to strengthen the financial foundation of the National Student Auditions. Please join us in celebrating Professor Brunssen's legacy by contributing to the Karen Brunssen Endowment.

[**DONATE**](#)

Karen Brunssen, mezzo-soprano, is Professor and Co-chair of the Department of Music Performance at Bienen School of Music, Northwestern University. She served as President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past-President of NATS from 2016 – 2022.

She coordinated the 2021 and 2022 NATS Intern Program, serves on numerous committees in NATS including chairing the Advancement Committee, and was Program Chair for the 2016 54th NATS National Conference in Chicago, a NATS Intern Master Teacher in 2013, governor of NATS Central Region from 2013 to 2016. She is a member of the American Academy of Teachers of Singing and was president of Chicago Singing Teachers Guild. Her book, *The Evolving Singing Voice: Changes Across the Lifespan* (Plural Publishing, 2018) chronicles changes in respiration, vibration and resonance, and realistic expectations for singing throughout life. Current interests include advancing international connectivity among voice teachers and vocal pedagogues.

A frequent vocal clinician, master teacher, panelist, and adjudicator, she presented at the 2022 NATS National Conference in Chicago, at the 2022 International Congress of Voice Teachers in Vienna, and at the 2022 World Choral Expo in Lisbon. She was a guest for the 2020 Online Eurovox, 2020 Classical Singer Virtual Conference, 2020 Classical Singer Music China Competition, NATS National Student Auditions, 2020/2018 NATSAA Competitions, 2018 NATS National Conference, 2017 International Congress of Voice Teachers in Sweden, 2017 National Collegiate Choral Organization, International Symposium on Singing and Song in Newfoundland 2015, Podium2016-Choral Canada, 2018 NATSAA finals adjudicator, NSA Finals in 2015/2017, at NATS Conferences in 2020, 2018, 2014, 2012, NATS Workshops, 2019/2015 ACDA National Conferences, Classical Singer, Association of Teachers of Singing in England, Opera America, and Chorus America.

She has done 13 teaching residencies at Cambridge University in England, numerous with the Zürcher Sing-Akademie in Switzerland, a 2019 residency with Shallaway Youth Choir in Newfoundland, taught at the Brancaleoni International Music Festival, Atlantic Music Festival, La Musica Lirica, International Institute of Vocal Arts in Italy, Castleton Music Festival, and Dorian Opera Theatre.

Her 30+ year singing career included solo appearances with Chicago, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Houston, Cleveland, St. Louis, National, San Diego, Seattle, Milwaukee, Netherlands Radio, Halle, and Mexico City Symphony Orchestras, Cincinnati Opera, Music of the Baroque, Grant Park Music Festival, Chicago Opera Theatre, Carmel Bach Festival, Prague Autumn Festival, Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Aspen Music Festival, Berkshire Choral Festival and more. Recordings include Telemann's Day of Judgment, Mozart's Mass in C Minor, and Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 with Music of the Baroque, John Philip Sousa's Desiree, and more.

Karen's students have won the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition, McAllister Competition, Oratorio Society of New York, Licia Albanese/Puccini Foundation, Loren L. Zachary Society Auditions, and more. They have been young artist and performed with the Metropolitan Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Washington National Opera, Merola Opera, Adler Fellowship Programs, Glimmerglass, Santa Fe, Chautauqua, Des Moines Metro Opera, Minnesota Opera, New York City Opera, Canadian Opera, Wolf Trap, Aspen Music Festival, and Sarasota Opera, as well as concert and oratorio, Broadway, national music theater tours, and teach privately and at collegiate levels.

Karen attended Luther College, did graduate work at Yale School of Music and Kent State University. In 2013 she received the Weston Noble Award by Luther College. She is a Consultant Editor with Plural Publishing.