

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* TEACHERS *of* SINGING



Rick Walters

THE RICK WALTERS MEMORIAL FUND

PROVIDES FUNDING FOR THE NATS NATIONAL STUDENT AUDITIONS

The National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) has established the Rick Walters Memorial Fund, to fund the Rick Walters Award for the NATS National Student Auditions. This award honors the memory and legacy of Rick Walters, a cherished friend of NATS, whose profound contributions to the world of classical and vocal music publishing continue to resonate within our community.

Rick Walters' illustrious career at Hal Leonard spanned four decades, leaving an enduring legacy within the realm of music publishing. Beginning as a transcriber of popular sheet music, Rick rose to become the Vice President of Classical & Vocal Publications. His visionary leadership was instrumental in expanding Hal Leonard's reach through significant acquisitions, including G. Schirmer and Boosey and Hawkes.

Throughout his tenure, Rick's dedication to preserving and presenting essential repertoire for students and teachers in the classical music realm was unparalleled. His legacy is epitomized by the invaluable music publications he shepherded, which continue to serve as a inspiration for musicians everywhere.

Among Rick's achievements was the establishment of the Hal Leonard Vocal Competition in 2011, the industry's first all-YouTube contest for vocal students. This initiative not only earned widespread respect but also propelled numerous students into successful singing careers.

Even after his retirement in 2023, Rick remained deeply involved in the music community, particularly with the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, where he mentored budding composition students and served on the board.

Rick's projects include the Singer's Musical Theatre Anthology series, the Hal Leonard Vocal Library series, Schirmer Performance Editions series, and collections of music by Benjamin Britten, Samuel Barber, Stephen Sondheim, and Mel Brooks.

In recognition of Rick Walters' extraordinary contributions to vocal music education, the NATS National Student Auditions will now feature the Rick Walters Award, celebrating excellence in performance and dedication to the art of singing. This permanent award stands as a testament to Rick's enduring legacy and his profound impact on the lives of singers and teachers alike.

GIVING to NATS

[Donate here](#) to the Rick Walters Memorial Fund or contact the NATS Executive Office at (904) 992-9101 for assistance.

