

VOICEPrints

JOURNAL OF THE NEW YORK SINGING TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

November–December 2012



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FEATURED EVENT:

CCM MASTER CLASS WITH MELISSA CROSS & *Holiday Reception*

December 3, 2012, Monday, 7:30–9:30 PM

Columbia University, Teachers' College, Grace Dodge Hall, Room 177/179,
525 West 120th Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, NYC.

Free to NYSTA members, their students and guests.



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OREN LATHROP BROWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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MESSAGE from the President

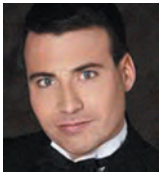


AN OPEN LETTER OF THANKS

As we move into the season of Thanksgiving, I must acknowledge a few members of NYSTA's Board of Directors for their tireless service though the years, and welcome some new members who will carry on this legacy of service and professionalism.



Nancy Adams has served on the Board of Directors since before my time with the organization. Her husband David was President of NYSTA (1996–1999), and after his passing Nancy was instrumental in creating the David Adams Art Song Competition, which NYSTA held semi-annually for many seasons. Nancy has served on almost every committee we have, including a term as the head of the Finance Committee. Her service culminated with her Vice Presidency in this first year of my second term (2011–2012). Thank you, Nancy, for your many years of service to NYSTA.



Matthew Hoch has been NYSTA's Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints* since 2008 and in addition to those duties will now step into the office of Vice President for the remainder of my term (June 2014). Matt has done an exemplary job as our Editor and I look forward to his wise and insightful counsel as Vice President. Thank you, Matt.

Sally Morgan has served on the NYSTA Board for the last four years. She served as our Administrative Assistant and worked closely with our PDP, Events, and Publicity committees. She also represented the organization at the 52nd Conference of NATS. She has also been our event videographer for the past three years. Thank you, Sally.



Rebecca Ellis continues to serve as NYSTA's Recording Secretary and will now be expanding her duties to cover the Administrative Assistant post vacated by Sally Morgan. Thank you, Becky.

We are also excited to welcome these new members of the NYSTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:



Justin Stoney joins the board this season and will also be serving on the PDP committee. Last season, Justin was featured in our Comparative Pedagogy weekend, specializing in pop, rock, R&B, and musical theater. He has also been featured by the Learning Annex as a guest teacher, and has given master classes throughout the country. Justin works with a vast array of students, from beginning singers to celebrity clients, Broadway singers and recording stars. Justin has taught over 1,000 New York singers and holds a strong reputation internationally as well with students from over 25 countries.



Felicity Graham also joins the board this season. She will be serving as our liaison to the International Congress of Voice Teachers (ICVT), and on both the PDP and the Internet Technology committees. Felicity received her BS in music from Tennessee State University, and an MA in music and music education from Teachers College, Columbia University. She is a member of the Voice Foundation, and, together with Dr. Jeanne Goffi-Fynn, presented at the Voice Foundation's Annual Symposium on the subject of the treatment of voice disorders in singers. She is an associate instructor at both TruVoice Studios and Sabella-Mills Studios.

Elizabeth Southard Mau

joins the board as a member of our nominating committee, in search of nominees for officers elect in the coming season. Elizabeth has worked extensively in musical theater, on Broadway and in national tours. Beth starred on Broadway as Christine in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera*, a role she also performed in the Vancouver production and the



national tour with her husband, Gary Mauer. She was chosen by Harold Prince to star as Magnolia in his latest revival of *Showboat*, its first national tour. She was also seen Off-Broadway as Sherlyn in Jack Eric William's *Swamp Gas and Shallow Feelings*.

Finally, I would like to update you on NYSTA's outreach into the professional voice community. This past summer NYSTA undertook the large task of being a major sponsor of the 52nd Conference of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS). Although we have always maintained a close and supportive relationship with our sister organization, this was our first endeavor at this type of sponsorship and this level of presence at their conference. Indeed, our presence was palpable. Our logo was featured prominently throughout the hotel and conference spaces, including on conference tote bags. Our sponsorship included an exhibition booth manned by four board members (Jennifer Cece, Ronnie Lederman, Sally Morgan, and Judith Nicosia) and myself, at which we offered information and registration for our PDP courses. We also sponsored the conference guidebook (smart-phone application), and several presenters at the conference were either NYSTA members or appreciatively mentioned NYSTA's PDP coursework as a prominent feature in their research.

As president of the organization, I also traveled to Salt Lake City to participate in the NCVS 2012 summer workshop, which centered on acoustic research of mezzo-soprano and countertenor voices. Before that I was in Philadelphia for the 2012 Voice Foundation Symposium, where I was co-author of a presentation with our esteemed colleague, Dr. Donald Miller.

NYSTA has been asked to attend (and participate in) the 2013 International Congress of Voice Teachers (ICVT, this year in Brisbane, Australia), and we look forward to several presentations (by members) at both the Voice Foundation 2013 and the 53rd NATS Conference (summer 2014).

Through these efforts NYSTA serves not only the NYC/Tristate area, but also the larger community of voice professionals abroad. It is your support that makes this possible, and I truly thank each of you for your own personal commitment to our organization.

Happy Holidays to all. I will look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and courses.

Sincerely,

David Sabella-Mills

David Sabella-Mills
President, NYSTA

MESSAGE from the Editor

Dear Colleagues,

hope you're all having a wonderful autumn. This issue marks my 22nd as your editor, and my fifth season has proven to be bountiful in terms of the number of new NYSTA members and the sheer volume of quality articles and submissions that I have received over the past six months. I am grateful for these submissions and appreciate your patience, as sometimes there may be a waiting

period until we can publish them. This month, we are featuring six new NYSTA members, and many more will appear in future issues. I am especially grateful to Dr. Kate Maroney for her intriguing article on Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's *Einstein on the Beach*, which is currently touring the globe. Kate is a performer in this production, and it is enlightening for readers to



approach this challenging work from a singer's perspective. In her article, Dr. Maroney deftly weds scholarship with the empiricism of a singer's instinct. I hope you enjoy reading her piece as much as I enjoyed editing it for this issue.

Happy Holidays from all of us at NYSTA. As always, *VOICEPrints* is YOUR publication, so please send all questions, comments, and suggestions for future articles to me at voiceprints@nyst.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matthew Hoch

Editor-in-Chief, *VOICEPrints*

NYSTA CALENDAR 2012–2013

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WINTER 2013 ONLINE EVENT *with Dr. Karen Wicklund*

February 11, 2013 Monday, 9:00–11:00 PM (US EST) Available worldwide via WebEx Video Classroom

Presentation and Q&A: "The Teacher's Role as Professional Voice Team Member: Knowledge and Skills Needed for Working with Singers with Voice Disorders"

Free to NYSTA Members, Students and Guests

Dr. Karen Wicklund, DM, MHS CCC-SLP, SVS, is Director of the Chicago Center for Professional Voice where she provides singing lessons, licensed voice therapy, foreign and regional accent modification and corporate speech training, singing voice specialist training for voice teachers, and continuing education offerings for speech-language pathologists. An internationally-known vocal pedagogue and singer's wellness specialist, Dr. Wicklund has presented her research at the national conventions of the Voice Foundation in Philadelphia, National Association of Teachers of Singing, National Center for Voice and Speech in Denver, the American Speech and Hearing Association, and the Occupational Voice Foundation in London, and has published articles on the Medical Problems of Performing Artists in *NATS Journal of Singing*, *Liturgy 90*, *American Organist* and *Women of Note Quarterly* and *Voice Notes of NYSTA*. Her textbook, *Singing Voice Rehabilitation: A Guide for the Voice Teacher and SLP*, was called "a monumental addition to the field of vocal health" by the *NATS Journal of Singing*. She has presented sessions at the 2010 NATS national convention, for NATS Chicago in October 2011, at the NATS Winter Workshop in Tucson, and in New Zealand as keynote speaker for the Richard Miller workshop.

Dr. Wicklund is a regular presence on vocal health and healthy belting techniques for Vandercook College of Music in Chicago and in workshops around the country. Her singers have been seen on the stages of Broadway (*Legally Blonde*), Drury Lane (*Spelling Bee*), Marriott Lincolnshire (*Guys and Dolls*), Chicago Light Opera Works, Lyric Opera Chicago, and other theaters throughout the country.

Dr. Karen Wicklund has performed leading roles with the San Francisco, Santa Fe, and Lake George opera companies and appeared as soloist with conductors including Sir David Willcocks, Semyon Bychkov, John DeMain, and Thomas Hoekstra.

OREN LATHROP BROWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM *

COMPARATIVE PEDAGOGY *Weekend 2013*

June 8 and 9, 2013, Saturday and Sunday

Location: Teachers College, Columbia University, Room 435, 120th Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, NYC.

During this course, six master teachers will present teaching demonstrations after case histories of students have been discussed. Concrete links will be made between various teaching strategies and the scientific and medical information covered in other courses of the PDP program. Faculty and Schedule: TBA.

* All PDP courses are \$250 (\$220 for NYSTA members) and can be registered and paid for online at www.nyst.org. One graduate credit per course is available from Westminster Choir College, for an additional \$150. A form will be obtained at the class. For more information, visit www.pdp@nyst.org or www.nyst.org/courses.



Reflections from the Beach: *Einstein on the Voice*

by Kate Maroney, DMA

For the past year I have been traveling around the world performing in what might be considered the least conventional “opera” a conservatory-trained singer could imagine: Philip Glass and Robert Wilson’s *Einstein on the Beach*. (That’s right, all four and a half hours of it!) This experience has been an interesting departure from the career I envisioned during my years of conservatory training. In school the emphasis is on honing excellent vocal technique in order to sing standard classical repertoire, those stalwart paradigms of German *lieder*, *bel canto* opera, and French *mélodie* that we are taught first and best to love, and that, I should add, I *do* love. In conservatory programs, perhaps at the encouragement of an inspiring music history teacher or well-loved coach, occasional forays may also be made into repertoire “on the fringes,” a set of lute songs or Berio programmed on an adventurous young singer’s recital. I cannot recall, however, a conservatory opera scenes program which included anything remotely like *Einstein on the Beach*, and for good reason—this is a preposterous idea! *Einstein* is an amalgam of music and dance virtuosity, lighting and technical wizardry—a true and unique *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which the sum is exponentially more powerful than all of its parts. These parts together comprise a dream-like, non-narrative experience for the viewer—a juxtaposition of abstract dance movements choreographed by Lucinda Childs, set to Philip Glass’s music and visually enveloped by Robert Wilson’s direction, set, and lighting design. To top it all off, the audience is invited to come and go as they please!

Friends who have seen the show have compared it to installation art, a once-in-a-lifetime artistic experience, and Robert Wilson compares it to watching a sunset. Because the costs and scale of the production are enormous and so specific (there are twelve dancers, twelve singers, four actors—rather than for orchestra, the piece is scored for the Philip Glass Ensemble), this tour represents the first time the piece has been done in twenty years: it’s not a show an opera company can program independently.

But there are some exquisite vocal moments that can be excerpted. Back to the Conservatory Opera Scenes scenario—the prospect of “Knee 3!” sandwiched between an excerpt from *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Rape of Lucretia* is at once hilarious and wonderful. I’d love to see this creativity in programming—it would certainly suggest the versatility that singers need to succeed in life after school.

If a young singer is interested in performing this sort of music, where would he or she go to seek training and opportunities? Are there Young Artist programs that develop the skills necessary to sing “new music?” Yes, and there are increasing opportunities developing everywhere. Bang on a Can in North Adams, Massachusetts—the brainchild of composers Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe—and MusicX at the Hindemith Music Foundation Center in Switzerland are summer festivals where young singers can hone specialized skills for performing specialized music and meet other young musicians interested in doing the same. There are also growing opportunities within conservatories—whether they be student-composer creations like OSSIA (literally “musical alternative”) at Eastman, or the fully-developed Contemporary Performance Program masters degree at Manhattan School of Music, or a host of other groups and programs developing in schools everywhere. If interested in exploring this route, one must simply do some research and reach out. Young composers are often

eager to work with singers—especially singers that are enthusiastic, brave, and willing to try new things to expand their musical palates.

Aside from developing knowledge of the repertoire and musicianship skills to perform contemporary music, the most important thing I’ve learned while singing *Einstein on the Beach* is that solid vocal technique is, above all, a requirement. Without it, none of us would be able to survive. My ability to make it through a nearly five-hour-long show, sometimes five days in a row, I attribute to years of voice lessons and a healthy vocal technique carefully instilled by teachers, coaches, and mentors. In this article, I’d like to discuss the particular technical challenges and skills needed for singers in a unique performing experience like *Einstein*, and to share what I’ve learned and how I’ve adapted along the way. Let’s start at the beginning!

Part One: The Audition Process

The first part of the *Einstein* experience was the audition. The first “fun” challenge was to find appropriate repertoire to bring to this. I couldn’t immediately think of piano-vocal selections that exhibit the lightening-fast *soffège* and counting needed for *Einstein*. After searching databases and spending an afternoon poring over scores at the New York City Public Library for the Performing Arts, I chose relatively mainstream choices: songs by Bernstein and Ives. I wanted to offer modern pieces that showed clarity of rhythm and diction, were tonal without being too lushly neo-romantic, and that still showed my voice off while highlighting the qualities of musicianship I thought important.

Picking the right audition repertoire is half the battle. One of the best pieces of advice a voice teacher ever gave me was to find a few selections you love to sing no matter what—pieces you could roll out of bed and perform. I think this idea can be stretched to include style: find a few styles, languages, composers who really resonate with you, and make your niche singing that music really well. The perfect audition list is a balance of your own favorite pieces and then those custom-tailored for the audition—in other words, repertoire that both shows you off and also demonstrates your good understanding of the work for which you’re auditioning.

The initial audition was with Michael Riesman, long-time music director of the Philip Glass Ensemble who has conducted every performance of *Einstein on the Beach* since 1976, and Lisa Bielawa, who has been soprano soloist with the Ensemble for over twenty years. I sang the pieces I brought and then did some impromptu rhythmic exercises that involved switching seamlessly from clapping fives to sixes—something we do while singing numbers in the show. When the email came a week later inviting me to the call-back audition with Robert Wilson and including excerpts to prepare, I was both excited and terrified! The first step was to decipher the score and its “figures.” Figures are the musical cells that, strung together, make up the whole opera, and consist of either one or several bars that are repeated an indicated number of times.

In Figure 55 from “Night Train” shown here, there are two bars. Each has a bracket above with an indication that the individual bars are repeated four times. The entire figure (four times each of both bars) is repeated twice, before moving on to the next figure. This notational device is particular to this period of Glass’s music.

Figure 1: *Einstein on the Beach*, “Night Train,” figure 55.

Sung slowly these figures aren’t so hard, although you’ll notice that the alto “mi-si” sits directly in the passaggio and thus takes some “getting into the voice.” At first, when I listened to the recording and followed the score, I would get completely lost. (Stay with me here—who says singers can’t count?) The excerpt consists of eighth notes that remain constant in each figure, but which are beamed in groups of either three or four. The left hand of the electric organ part plays beamed groups of four eighth notes throughout the entire piece. The voice parts switch between groups of fours and threes. The *soffège* vocal parts are also beamed in groups of four and line up with the organ—they are relatively easy to hear and are sung in double time. The numbered vocal parts are grouped in threes, creating a polyrhythmic relationship of three to four. The numbered groups of three align only once in a while with the start of each four note organ part, so they are much easier to rush and sing out of sync.

The trickiest polyrhythmic bars for me to internalize in “Night Train” were instances where I was singing sustained dotted-quarter notes or dotted-half notes, which span three or six eighth-note groupings in other voice parts—again, all over the groupings of four eighth notes continuing in the left hand of the organ. This is illustrated below in Figure 64. I worked hard to really hear the three against four and to make sure I knew exactly where to place the dotted quarters. It takes some listening, singing, and percussionist-worthy lap-tapping exercises to get used to these

Figure 2: *Einstein on the Beach*, “Night Train,” figure 64.



Author Kate Maroney

conflicting groupings, though it looks deceptively simple on the score. Eventually in rehearsals we were advised to treat these sections as though they are in 1/8, in other words, making sure that every single eighth note is exactly the same. Note to reader: *rubato* is NOT stylistically appropriate here. You slow down and that train keeps on moving!

Learning excerpts for the callback audition gave me a good idea of what to expect, should I land the job. For a while I felt like a human metronome until eventually these sections began to feel more organic, more relaxed, and much easier to sing. I cannot stress how important it is to break rhythmically challenging music apart and slow it down, refusing the temptation to speed up to performance tempo until you are absolutely locked in and can hear and feel exactly where every beat is. This is a learning technique that should be applied to all music, but is especially crucial for contemporary music where the singer is usually treated as another instrument in the ensemble. Not only is accuracy important for the integrity of the music itself, but it is also amazing how confident singing and hearing reduces tension and the amount of work necessary to keep up with those steadily driving eighth notes. We call it “using fewer calories” in singing the piece, a crucial anti-fatigue aid after several hours. I didn’t think about it at the time, but meticulously learning and internalizing this audition excerpt, training my ears to hear exactly what was happening in this section, helped to set a technical foundation for learning and singing the entire work. These tools were very useful later on.

By the day of the callback, I felt confident in my musical preparation but was still terrified because I had no idea what to expect from Robert Wilson and the movement portion of the process. From what I knew of Wilson’s aesthetic, I expected that the movement would be glacial. And it was! It consisted of walking forward continuously over the course of three minutes while covering no more than a foot—feeling space and energy in front of and behind one’s head, all while moving smoothly, continuing to breathe, being present, and feeling ten pairs of eyes—Wilson’s included—on me the whole time. I went home that day feeling I had just had one of the strangest experiences of my life. I’m not sure I fully exhaled until I got the news a few days later: “How would you like to go on tour with us?” And so it began.

Part Two: Early Rehearsals

There were about six months between the time we all were hired and the start of rehearsals in New York, ample time for the excitement to grow. When we received our scores in the mail, we also received instructions *not* to sing much on our own in order to

prepare (i. e. “Do not try this alone at home”). We were assured that we’d be coached on how to sing without grossly fatiguing ourselves and have plenty of rehearsal time to memorize. For a Type A personality like me, especially given my years of opera training, requiring that roles be memorized *before* rehearsals begin, *not* preparing music ahead of time was more easily said than done! I listened a lot and familiarized myself with the entire score. I would occasionally and frustratingly attempt to sing movements and either become totally fatigued after five or ten minutes of singing the same intervals of a fourth through my *passaggio*, or not be able to keep up at all with the rapidly sung numbers in the “Knee Plays.” I crossed my fingers that singing this music with my fellow singers would be easier, as we had been told it would be. I kept practicing Bach and Mozart along with learning the Glass to keep my regular singing in shape.

Luckily, when we started musical rehearsals a few weeks later, I learned that singing this music with my colleagues was indeed easier. Practicing repertoire on one’s own before pairing with a pianist, ensemble, or other voices is usually more difficult—the tendency is often to over-sing or for tension to creep in until the music is comfortably learned and in the voice. I found this to be doubly true with this piece, since a majority of the movements consist of singing intervals rather than lyrical melodic phrases. To ease sometimes jagged lines into my voice, sirens and sliding became my favorite vocalises. I would make sure my breath was connected by filling in all of the pitches or alternating between clean articulations of each note of an interval, and legato slides that connected the notes. Another technical trick when singing repeated *solfège* syllables for extended periods—as in the two dance movements which total 40 minutes of continual “la-re” in the alto line—is slightly altering the vowel every few minutes. Lisa Bielava imparted a lot of technical guidance as we were learning the piece together, and I found this voice-saving trick particularly useful—she adjusts her [a] or [e] vowel (or any vowel, for that matter) every few minutes. This makes the brain and vocal mechanism feel something new and different is being sung and results in a HUGE difference in stamina after several hours. Although it may seem clinical in its repetition of numbers or *solfège*, once mastered technically, the music is visceral and emotional—when singing it I often feel lost in something so much greater than my own voice.

I quickly learned when we started rehearsals that my colleagues were amazing singers and people. Though most of us come from similar backgrounds in the sense that we all have vocal training, we bring a wide variety of performance experiences to the table. Our ensemble includes jazz, cabaret, music theater, and pop-rock singers, artists who specialize in “new” music exclusively, some who have made careers singing mostly Baroque music, and those of us who do a little bit of everything in between. We also range in age from 24 to 54—there are several singers who toured the piece 20 years ago whom we call the “Class of ‘92.” Not only is our group diverse, but I’ve also been amazed to witness the individual versatility and flexibility in each singer—essential for this type of project.

It became clear during the first week of musical rehearsals that each of us learns, processes, and memorizes music differently. Each had his own method of internalizing rhythms—some people swayed, some tapped, some had complex analysis of the music, some conducted themselves, and so on. The flexibility and collegiality in our group became apparent during this time. There was a general respect in the group for our varied learning methods (though we eventually banned foot-tapping). Day after day we repeated the trickiest movements, slowly and



Kate Maroney with Robert Wilson

permanently etching the music into our brains and voices. We bonded over memorizing hand gestures and staging that aligned with *nearly* repetitive figures that were carefully assigned to the hour-long “Trial” scene where we play the role of the jury. The group memory effect helped us at this point—looking at my notes, I thought there was no way I would ever be able to commit everything to memory (It makes memorizing Czech and Russian seem like a walk in the park!) Then one day, many weeks later, we were somehow all there. I distinctly remember a beautiful moment during these rehearsals, when we were first pairing some of the music with Lucinda Childs’ ravishing dance sequences—watching the dancers twirl and leap to the music that expands, contracts, loops, and pulses in a raw expression of unbridled joy. With tears in my eyes and goosebumps all over my body, I suddenly realized that this brilliant choreography was a physical manifestation of Glass’s music: performed together the effect is stunningly gorgeous. Another of my favorite memories from this period is when Philip Glass entered our rehearsal and listened for a while, a huge smile on his face—I will never forget the excitement of singing one of the most iconic pieces of the Twentieth Century for the composer himself. True, I was star-struck at the time, but he has joined us on various stops along the tour, and I am continually amazed by his humility and friendliness.

Before we finished our rehearsals in New York, we were given the next element—wireless microphones and monitors. Because the Philip Glass Ensemble consists of two electric keyboards, three saxophonists who also play various woodwind instruments, and a solo soprano, all amplified, we also need to be amplified for the show. Having a microphone taped to my face while singing for hours was a first! Our monitors are Apple earbuds that we can either wear in one or both ears. We do remove them for a few a cappella vocal moments in the show where we are singing in close enough proximity to hear one another acoustically, and the monitors are set to a customized mix. (“Mix” refers to levels of our own singing plus different instruments in the ensemble, tailored by a sound engineer who can constantly shift things depending on what we need to hear in our ear.) This enables us singers to tune with each other and with the ensemble. Singing with a monitor mix in one’s ear and a microphone requires a modified vocal technique and very deliberate vocal pacing throughout the course of the show. I learned immediately that the volume of the mix has to be exactly right—set too high, one risks over-singing and thus vocal fatigue early on; set too low can also result in over-singing because one can’t hear oneself or any voices

in the mix.

Knowing how to hear exactly what I need to hear to sing healthily is a skill I've developed out of necessity. Any singer who uses amplification and monitors—which often a part of contemporary music performance—must be comfortable with this. It's a crucial difference from acoustic singing.

In *Einstein*, breath support is also crucial. Low breathing and pointed, frontal resonance that is clean and articulated perfectly in tune and without much vibrato are necessary to sustain healthy singing. Maintaining a relaxed neck, jaw, tongue, and articulators, is something I think about constantly—so I often concentrate on transferring energy to my breathing and the rest of my body for support. I massage my face and neck before the show to relax the muscles. The goal, as with any singing, is to keep the throat and jaw relaxed, open, and tension-free—the moment tension enters one of those areas, another mechanism kicks in, usually another impetus for over-singing.

Our final rehearsal in New York was a full musical run, with ensemble, microphones, and monitors, so we all got a sense of the stamina needed to get through one of these shows and the excitement of performing all of the music at once. We made it and we were ready to get onstage!

Part Three: Touring and Beyond

In January we flew to Ann Arbor, Michigan for technical rehearsals that culminated in three preview performances at the Power Center for Performing Arts. In addition to continuing to rehearse (and memorize) the show, the main purpose of these rehearsals was for Robert Wilson to re-light and work out the myriad technical elements involved. This has meant that our incarnation of *Einstein* looks amazing, given the innovations made in lighting technology over the past twenty years. But it also made for some long, grueling days where we had to stand in place for hours. We learned to adapt to singing through stage fog, relying on onstage monitors (in addition to our earbuds) for certain scenes, navigating the set and orchestra pit wearing Converse sneakers and Robert Wilson's trademark white makeup for hours. This is where we began to learn ways to adapt to the intensity of life on tour while working on a piece that was physically and mentally exhausting. For singers, hydration is important, it can mean drinking a ton of water a full day or two before singing. Many of us also tried to establish a gym routine—I've personally found that cardiovascular exercise everyday mixed with yoga provides a great balance. The first time we ran the show onstage, mental stamina was as difficult to maintain as vocal stamina. Yoga has helped me feel strong, focused, and balanced with a kind of relaxed energy that keeps me invested in some of the very long scenes. An idea of a long scene—"Knee 1" opens the opera after a series of tones played by one keyboardist as the audience begins to enter the theater. Over the course of nearly twenty minutes, each singer slowly enters the pit at staggered 90-second intervals, and we stand looking at various audience members as they take their seats. All of this happens *before* we start singing! Once we begin, the singing lasts about fifteen minutes. This clocks the opening of the show at about forty minutes—the "tones" literally set the tone for the entire piece. One enters the theater and time slows down.

During our opening preview performance, the sold-out theater buzzed with a palpable energy—music, theater, and art critics, students and fans from all over the world gathered in snowy Ann Arbor to witness the first revival performance after a 20-year hiatus. As music critic Alex Ross put it, "I've waited half my life to see the piece, and I was decidedly

undisappointed: what an ecstatically dumbfounding thing this is." The profundity and excitement of being a part of this production hit me during those performances—we were going to be able to share this beauty with more people throughout the world on this tour than the total number of people who had ever seen the piece live before.

I was amazed at the reception for our shows in Ann Arbor—though the audience did wander in and out (something that takes getting used to), they were rapt for the most part, and became increasingly absorbed as the hours went by. By the end it felt like they had earned, along with the performers, the privilege of experiencing the final scenes—their ovations were cathartic and ecstatic, exactly how I feel after every performance.

Though the previews in Ann Arbor were beyond exciting, it felt like the tour really got started when we flew to Montpellier in March for the official opening. The group had continued to bond over our month apart. We were all excited to be in France and the French seemed excited to have us there! It felt like a homecoming for *Einstein on the Beach*, which had had its premiere in Avignon in 1976. The rehearsal days were long again, as in Ann Arbor, but by the opening performance, excitement and adrenaline carried us through, and the French bestowed buckets of white roses on the stage, cheering for ovation after ovation—another thrilling moment I'll not soon forget.

Since the tour began officially, we've performed in Reggio Emilia, London, Toronto, and at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York City (home for most of us!) We've had tremendous receptions everywhere—like Alex Ross, many people have been waiting half their lives to see this show. We will continue to share the piece in Berkeley, Mexico City, Amsterdam, and Hong Kong, and there are other potential venues in discussion for future performances. In the words of Albert Einstein, "Creativity is contagious. Pass it on." This is what we're doing.

The benefits from my experience with *Einstein on the Beach* are innumerable and I can only begin to reflect on the personal and musical growth this tour has provided—it can take years to understand the gains from such a life-changing experience.

Many of the technical skills I've developed over the past year from the demands of this piece have enhanced my singing in all areas, perhaps most noticeably my sense of intonation and rhythm. I've learned to listen to the demands of my voice and body when I'm singing every day for sustained periods—most valuably how to pace myself and know my vocal limit, something all singers must learn in one way or another. I've had the honor of *sharing* this unique experience with a beautiful collection of artists who make up our company, forging deep friendships that will undoubtedly last my entire life.

I hope that I've conveyed some practical and technical ideas, as well as my strong feeling that singers should be open to new musical adventures. My experience illustrates that something one might not envision as being part of a career may possibly become one of the best parts of one's career. Be open to every new opportunity. There is nothing greater than the joy of sharing something immeasurably beautiful with people all over the world. I feel immensely privileged that this is my job.

FOOTNOTES

¹There are five vocally virtuosic interludes called "Knee Plays" in the opera, thus named because they serve to connect scenes of the opera as the knee connects the upper and lower parts of the leg. "Knee 3" is performed a cappella and consists of rapidly sung numbers. It is an audience favorite.



Recognized for her "lithe and lively" tone (*The Berkshire Eagle*) and intelligent musicianship, mezzo-soprano **Kate**

Maroney is active performing early and contemporary music around the world.

After earning her DMA at Eastman in voice performance and literature (with a minor in pedagogy) she moved to New York City, where she has been heard as a soloist with Bach Vespers, Mark Morris Dance Group, Bard SummerScape, Saint Luke in the Fields, New York Choral Society, Berkshire Bach Society, Fairfield County Chorale, Orchestra Sinfonica Milano di Giuseppe Verdi (international debut), TENET NYC, and has appeared numerous times at Carnegie, Avery Fisher, and Alice Tully Halls.

She has sung at the Oregon Bach Festival, Mostly Mozart Festival, with Trinity Wall Street, the American Classical Orchestra and New York Virtuoso Singers, and is regular member of several chamber groups: Etherea Vocal Ensemble, Yale Choral Artists, and Manhattan Concert Chorale. Kate is currently a featured soloist in the world tour of *Glass' Einstein on the Beach* and she premiered Missy Mazzoli's Song from the Uproar, which was recently released on New Amsterdam Records. Kate recorded James Adler's Reflections upon a September Morn for Albany Records. Upcoming projects include the world premiere of Marie Incontrera's Quagmires and the Known Knowns with Brooklyn Art Song Society at Galapagos Art Space and concerts with Vox Vocal Ensemble at The Guggenheim Museum under George Steel.

Kate has taught voice and voice pedagogy at University of Rochester, Yale University, and currently teaches privately in New York City. She has also worked as a freelance editor with the music department at W. W. Norton & Co. In addition to her DMA, Kate holds degrees from Yale and SUNY Purchase. www.katemaroney.com

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NYSTA New Members 2012-2013



American soprano **Ilana Davidson** brings a crystalline soprano, assured musicality, and interpretive insight to repertoire spanning the 12th to the 21st centuries. She has closely collaborated with composers William Bolcom, John Zorn and Bright Sheng; as well as conductors Alan Gilbert, Jaap van Zweden, Keith Lockhart, Reinbert de Leeuw, Oliver Knussen, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Harry Bicket, Carl St. Clair, Michael Riesman, Lothar Zagrosek, Lawrence Renes, and Claus Peter Flor. Ms. Davidson maintains an active private studio in Riverdale, New York. For 15 years, she was head of the Voice for All Singers program at the National Guitar Workshop and is certified in Vocal Behavior Training, a study and teaching of the physiological underpinnings of vocal development and health. She has taught master classes at the Hebrew Union College in NYC and is on the voice faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America for Cantors. Publications include *Sing Your Best*, which is published by Alfred Music Publishing. Ms. Davidson is guest professor of voice, vocal chamber music, and the Bach Aria Group at St. Ann's School. www.davidsonvoicestudio.com.



Soprano **Felicity Graham** received her BS in vocal performance from Tennessee State University and her MA in music and music education from Teachers College, Columbia University. As a voice instructor, she brings her experience as both a performer and a researcher in the science of singing to her studio, combining artistry with practical techniques taken from all aspects of voice science and pedagogy. Ms. Graham is a frequent performer of concert music. As a champion of American art music, she has premiered new works from a wide range of current composers. As a researcher, she has presented, together with Dr. Jeanne Goffi-Fynn, at the Voice Foundation's Annual Symposium, on the treatment of voice disorders in singers. Ms. Graham is also a member of *First Chair*, a non-profit outreach program created with the aim of connecting performing artists and aspiring music teachers to performance opportunities in high-need schools with limited or non-existent music programs.



With a career spanning the classical and modern choral works, solo recitals, and operatic roles, **Bradley Howard** has developed a repertoire that includes some of opera's most famous roles, including Mozart's Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), Puccini's Rodolfo (*La bohème*), Leoncavallo's Beppe (*I pagliacci*), Britten's Peter Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*), and the title roles in Britten's *Albert Herring* and Bernstein's *Candide*. Mr. Howard's concert engagements include Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Requiem*, Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Creation*, Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Bach's *St. John Passion* and *B Minor Mass*. Mr. Howard earned his BM in voice performance at Baylor University and his MM in voice performance at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He currently serves as Director of Vocal Studies at Emory University, where he teaches opera workshop, performance techniques, and coordinates the vocal program.



Soprano **Cathy Motley-Fitch**, active both as a performer and teacher, now resides in the Richmond, Virginia area. She has appeared in national tours and regional theater companies across the United States. Ms. Motley-Fitch has also performed around the world in her solo cabaret and in production shows for various cruise lines. She has served as musical director for Cedar Fair's Kings Dominion and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines. She has been on the faculty of Richmond's School of the Performing Arts as well as in the local high school system. She continues to perform as one of the "Richmond Divas," in commercials, through voiceover work. Ms. Motley-Fitch's studio focuses on skills for vocal technique, creativity, self-confidence, self-esteem, and motivation. Her students have gone on to work on Broadway, in Las Vegas, and for cruise lines theme parks, and regional theaters. Cathy holds a degree in vocal performance from Virginia Commonwealth University and is excited to be joining NYSTA.



Soprano **Deborah Popham** attended the University of Akron, earning a BM degree in voice performance as well as BA degrees in English and Philosophy. She concluded her studies at Arizona State University, where she earned an MM in music theater performance (opera) and her DMA degree in voice performance. A few of Dr. Popham's performing credits include Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Vitellia in *La clemenza di Tito*, and Cathleen in *Riders to the Sea*. She has performed internationally as a soloist throughout Italy and Switzerland. Some of her opera directing credits include *La divina* (Pasatieri), *La Canterina* (Haydn), *The Ballad of Baby Doe* (Moore), and *The Old Maid and the Thief* (Menotti). As part of her dissertation, Dr. Popham produced and directed a performance of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Orpheus and Euridice*. She is an Assistant Professor of Music, Director of Opera Theater, and Coordinator of Vocal Studies at Shorter University.



Brittney Redler is a performer and educator currently residing in New York City as a doctoral student in vocal performance at NYU Steinhardt. She received her BM from Ithaca College in vocal performance and music education, her MM from NYU Steinhardt in vocal performance, and has completed the Summer Vocology Institute at the National Center for Voice and Speech (NCVS). In addition to maintaining a private studio, she serves as adjunct faculty at NYU teaching private and group voice lessons, and at Highbridge Voices in the Bronx, where she teaches voice to students grades 4–12 as part of the after school choir program. Performance credits include *Redler and Cooper's Breakfast* (Gretta), *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Fire, Nightingale), *Die Zauberflöte* (First Lady), *A Little Night Music* (Mrs. Nordstrom), *Into the Woods* (Rapunzel), *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Amor), *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Mother Jeanne), *Suor Angelica* (Sorella/Novizia cover) and *L'elisir d'amore*. She also has performed in concerts and cabarets in and around New York City.

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Melissa Cross (left) and Philip Glass

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IN MEMORIAM



Marianne Challis

Marianne Challis was a professional voice teacher in New York City and primarily taught Broadway theater professionals. She also served as a vocal technician for organizations such as Disney Productions and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. She was a graduate of Eastern Illinois University in vocal performance and music education and also studied with the opera department of Northwestern University and at the famed Guthrie Theater. She was Associate Professor of Vocal Studies at the University of Hartford's Hartt School and served as a consultant to their musical theater program.

Ms. Challis operated Broadway Boot Camp, a workshop for young actors and musical theater performers through her Southport, Connecticut Studio Theater Program, teaching her unique blend of developmental acting and musical theater training.