

D. Michael Heath Wins NATS Find-A-Teacher Profile Contest

Sunday, 16 October 2011 00:00



To encourage NATS members to take advantage of the [Find A Teacher](#) membership benefit, NATS held a [Teacher Profile Contest](#) with a prize of one year free NATS membership going to the winner. To win, an entrant's profile had to be complete and visible with an outstanding description of teaching philosophy, experience, and education. Submitted Teacher Profiles were judged by Donald Simonson, NATS President, and Richard Sjoerdsma, *Journal of Singing* Editor in Chief, based on the

overall aesthetic, use of features available, writing and grammar, effective pitch of services, and the quality of the hyperlinked studio website (if any).

Sjoerdsma announced earlier this month, "Twenty-nine entries provided a formidable task of adjudication. Most surpassingly met the criteria identified above, and many sites proved to be stunningly attractive and inventive, with creative and useful links. Following close examination and careful deliberation, we adjudicators agreed to award the prize to [D. Michael Heath](#) of New York City." Of the entrants, Sjoerdsma said, "Both Dr. Simonson and I were greatly pleased with the extraordinarily high quality of the entries, along with the healthy interest in and commitment to sound pedagogic practice. Congratulations to all entrants, and, recognizing how trite it may sound, I nonetheless insist that all are winners."

D. Michael Heath has his teaching studio in Manhattan with students that have performed in Broadway, Off-Broadway, and national touring productions. He has served on voice faculties of several universities and is frequently called upon to give vocal master classes nationwide and in Hong Kong. Heath was kind enough to respond to a few questions put to him by the NATS Executive Staff:

NATS: What inspired you to enter the contest?

Heath: My friend, colleague, and fellow NATS member, Nancy Martin (Professor Emerita of Voice, Music Department/Northern Kentucky University) suggested I enter.

NATS: What are the most valuable benefits of your NATS membership?

Heath: The NATS publication, *Journal of Singing*, provides me a wide variety of informative and educational articles that inspire my own continuing education. Growing my understanding of singing in a wide range of musical styles is essential to keeping my teaching process vital and relevant in today's professional vocal music scene. The *Journal of Singing* is a genuine resource.

NATS: What advice can you give to the new voice teacher who is thinking about starting or expanding their private studio?

Heath: My teaching is born out of my passion for making the music: musical theater, classical, pop, rock, country-western, etc. Bring your joy for singing and a spirit of creativity to every client. Every client deserves your best effort and in return presents unique opportunities for mutual growth. Stay open to multiple

musical styles and you may be surprised how your growing understanding of multiple styles informs your own area of expertise. Trust the music!

NATS: How has technology changed the way you market your services?

Heath: Having your educational, academic and performance credentials along with your professional affiliations available online to be reviewed by potential clients and employers is a genuine advantage that has already opened up unexpected opportunities. As a result of launching my [website](#) this past July, I have welcomed numerous new clients into my NYC voice studio and have received invitations from theatrical organizations to be a conference presenter and to participate on workshop panels. My website provides a brief teaching philosophy, student/client testimonials, professional colleague comments, a comprehensive look at my thirty-five year professional performance career on Broadway, in concert, and onstage along with my experience directing, coaching, and teaching in academic institutions, universities, and in private vocal studios. I'm hoping that having this online presence, readily available to interested members of the voice community, will also attract future invitations from universities for Master Classes, Musical Theater Workshops and Guest Artist/Faculty Positions. I welcome the possibilities and opportunities found in learning/teaching environments along with the artistic collaboration that I find in the company of my fellow performing artists and instructors in the arts. Visit my website and let's make plans to... 'Make the Music!' www.voicestudionyc.com



As an active NATS member, you also have a chance to make your name known to new students. "NATS is involved in several emerging partnerships that will continue to drive even more traffic to our website, particularly the Find A Teacher page," says Allen Henderson, Executive Director.

"With over 7,000 members teaching over 150,000 students each year, those who share their profiles will continue to be the first ones who are sought out by those seeking voice instruction." The [Find A Teacher web pages](#) rank second in hits to the NATS home page, with 25% more traffic than last year. With the popularity of singing competitions growing world-wide, there are more budding vocalists than ever looking for singing teachers.

Sjoerdsma adds, "I urge those who have not done so to create a profile to enter on the "Find a Teacher" site, and I would recommend that those already listed review their profiles in order to make them as creative and attractive as possible."

Don't know how to make your NATS Teacher Profile visible online? The NATS Executive Office has developed a downloadable FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) document to help you get the most out of your NATS membership. [Download the NATS Website User Guide](#) and update your Teacher Profile to get found by new voice students today!