

Melinda Beasi

Arts Educator/Theatrical Director

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Theatrical Direction

Il sogno d'Arianna*	Act Too Studio Opera Workshop	Northampton, MA
The Medium	Act Too Studio Opera Workshop	Easthampton, MA
Evening of Opera Scenes	Act Too Studio Opera Workshop	Sunderland, MA
Goblin Market	Act Too Studio	South Hadley, MA
The Fantasticks	Frankenmuth Historical Association	Frankenmuth, MI
Pure Imagination	Frankenmuth Historical Association	Frankenmuth, MI

*Upcoming, summer 2016, Academy of Music, Northampton, MA

Arts Education

Associate Artistic Director, Act Too Studio, South Hadley, MA

January 2013 - Present (Vocal & Acting Coach from 2009-Present)

Serious, professional instruction in acting and vocal performance (including repertoire, technique, theory, and audition skills) for students of all ages, via private coaching sessions, group classes, and workshops. Specialization in expressive singing and music appreciation, heavily utilizing Dalcroze Eurhythmics methodology. Specialized classes & curriculum include:

Act Too Studio Opera Workshop

The Act Too Studio teen Opera Workshop began as a week-long intensive exploring the second act of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and continues as an ongoing, student-driven entity. The workshop currently has twenty student participants between the ages of 14-18, at varying levels of vocal development and musical skill and experience, including a student director who works closely with the Melinda to assemble and maintain a repertoire of classical and modern opera appropriate to the students' developing voices. The students typically work on excerpts of larger works, and though this work is intended to be performed for the community, the focus of the workshop itself is very process-heavy. In order to bring their work to performance level, students are guided through deep musical and theatrical analysis of everything they do, along with study of the work's cultural and historical context.

In 2015, the workshop presented an evening of opera scenes during the spring school semester, followed by a full production of Gian Carlo Menotti's chamber opera, *The Medium*, in August. This year's upcoming program includes more scene work, as well as an ambitious summer staging of a series of Monteverdi madrigals with new, singable English translations adapted specially for the workshop.

Act Too Studio Professional Track

This program is offered to select students who have demonstrated, through ongoing study with us, the potential to consider a career in the performing arts. Though we know that students' dreams may change, the discipline and creative thinking required for this kind of study will serve them on any path they may one day choose to follow. Classes include:

- **Expressive Singing** – Heavily inspired by Dalcroze Eurhythmics methodology, this course uses movement, improvisation, and rhythmic dictation as tools with which to explore the core elements of musicality—pitch, dynamics, and rhythm—and their relationship to emotional intent.
- **Music Theory & Ensemble Singing** – Based on student need and multiple requests, we've combined basic music theory (new for some, review for others) with the study of ensemble pieces from both musical theater and classical repertoire, so that students can begin to immediately apply what they've learned about theory to practical ensemble singing.
- **Voice Class** – Experience has taught us that students can learn as much from watching each other as they can from their own private study. This monthly performance class provides Professional Track students the opportunity to share prepared studio and audition pieces with each other for guided group discussion and critique.
- **Musical Theater Literature & Repertoire** – In this hands-on course, students are introduced to the rich history and vast repertoire of the American musical theater tradition by way of both archival recordings and their own study and performance. Students acquire an understanding of the cultural context and common tropes of every era of musical theater, so that they may perform these works in a way that is dynamic, intelligent, and stylistically sound.

Music Appreciation: Total Arts Immersion

This ten-week music appreciation curriculum borrows techniques from Dalcroze Eurhythmics and Arts Integration programs as a means for indirectly addressing young students' most common stumbling blocks: intonation, phrasing, musicality, and developing an emotional connection to music.

Acting & Manga

In this unique single-day course, Melinda combines her background in acting with her expertise in Japanese comics by using sequential art to help students understand the importance of silence, space, and emotional beats in their work. Melinda is the long-time editor of industry-renowned comics blog *Manga Bookshelf* and editor of the book *Manga: Introduction, Challenges, and Best Practices*, published by Dark Horse Comics for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund in 2013.

Education

BFA Vocal Performance, Carnegie Mellon University

Voice Studio: Dr. Lee Cass

Vocal Coaching: Wendy Bobbitt, LeAnn Overton

Opera Workshop: Ralph Zitterbart

Dance: Sam Piperato, Buddy Thompson
Choral Studies: Dr. Robert Page
Acting: Jill Wadsworth, Janice Dean

Other areas of study: Dalcroze Eurhythmics (with Dr. Marta Sanchez); Solfege; Music History; Counterpoint; Music Theory; Italian, French, and German language and diction; Ethnomusicology; Jazz Vocals; The Roots of Rock & Roll (with musicologist Robert Palmer)

Activities and Societies: Sigma Alpha Iota (International Music Fraternity), Carnegie-Mellon Concert Choir, Carnegie-Mellon Jazz Choir, performances as Hansel in Humperdink's *Hansel and Gretel*, Amy in Sondheim's *Company*, and the Countess in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* with Carnegie-Mellon music department.

Professional Biography

Melinda has performed at Pittsburgh's Civic Light Opera, Pittsburgh Opera Theater, the Goodspeed Opera House, the Papermill Playhouse, the Olney Theater Center, and New York's City Center among many others. She toured as Sophie in the First National Tour of Terrence McNally's *Master Class* starring Faye Dunaway and as Kathy in The Night Kitchen's *Really Rosie*, designed and directed by author Maurice Sendak. Other credits include *Sweeney Todd* with George Hearn and Judy Kaye, *Strike Up the Band* with Emily Loesser, Jason Danieleley, and Kristin Chenoweth, and *One Touch of Venus* with Melissa Errico, David Alan Grier, and Jane Krakowski. In 2002, Melinda released an album of her original songs, *Dorrie's True Story*. She has also appeared on albums by singer-songwriter Meghan Cary and rocker Tommy Grasso, and was an original member of alternative rock band The Steve Friday Band.

Melinda's experience also extends to casting, most recently for local children's theater company FoodPlay Productions, where she was Managing Director from 2007-2014. Melinda is a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

Notable directors Melinda has worked with include Leonard Foglia, Charles Repole, Michael Mayer, Michael Montel, Rob Marshall, Jim Petosa, and Maurice Sendak. Musical directors include Jeffrey Saver, Rob Fisher, Don Jones, James Valcq, and Michael O'Flaherty.

References

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Alexa King, Former Student
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Additional references available upon request.