

## **Kevin Wilson, VP for Outreach**

I am currently serving in my first term as the VP of Workshops for the NATS National board. This year is unique because we have two shared events: our first, a joint workshop with the National Opera Association last winter in Savannah, GA, and then the International Congress of Voice Teachers in Toronto this July. I worked closely this year with the marketing, planning, and selection committees, as well as the overall planning for the NOA Winter Workshop, alongside Kelly Balmaceda, Director of Events. This event was largely successful, with a higher-than-average attendance for a winter workshop.

My interactions with the International Congress of Voice Teachers mainly involved serving on selection committees to review workshop proposals. This year alone, we received over 175 applications for workshops.

This year, we also hosted the inaugural AuditionCon alongside the joint NSA auditions held at Temple University in Philadelphia. Sixteen schools and organizations attended to recruit and connect with students. We developed a masterclass and instruction schedule that enabled 54 students to work with the participating schools. Feedback was strong and I was able to meet and interview each participating school to get video feedback for future marketing.

The first workshop under my purview is the NATS Winter Workshop in New York City this January. The theme of the workshop is titled: *The Teachers Toolbox: Practical Strategies to Cultivate Authentic Voices*. The NATS Winter Workshop, an immersive experience thoughtfully designed as a progressive journey—each session building on the last—to connect how we hear and assess singing, develop mind-body awareness through vocal and physical exercises, and navigate diverse styles for authentic and versatile singing. Whether a seasoned teacher or a rising professional, the idea is of participants to leave inspired, energized, and equipped with a refreshed teaching toolbox—and a renewed passion for the transformative power of singing.

Faculty: Ian Howell, Emily Siar, Leda Searce, Mary Saunders Barton, Melissa Malde, Mike Ruckles, Tom Burke, and Joan Lader.

Should I continue, I have been engaging in in-depth conversations with NATS board members, members, and non-members to determine how our programming can best serve our organization. My goal is to continue gathering insights so that any future programming is inclusive and aligned with the current needs of our organization. The desire for practical tools remains a top priority. However, I am also aware that we need to re-establish some roots in Classical singing and Jazz, as our organization has been forward-thinking but somewhat isolated in contemporary areas.