

## Bring on the blossoms

By Allen Henderson, NATS Executive Director

**W**ith the holidays already far in the rear-view mirror, down in south Georgia we are in the midst of an early February warm spell where it heats up just enough to fool us and some of the redbud trees and tulip magnolias begin to blossom. We even have the faint beginnings of the dreaded yellow haze of pollen. Likely, it will freeze again, those blossoms will wilt suddenly, and the haze will disappear for a few more weeks until a more permanent warm spell emerges in March (sorry, northern friends). I was thinking about how some of these plants are like our students and how part of our challenge is tending to our studios full of a wide variety of “blooms” all on their own schedule of growth and development.

Our spring audition season culminates with the preliminary online rounds and semifinals of the [NATS National Student Auditions](#). It was so energizing to see all of the excitement online during our fall audition season as most returned to live, in-person events. It has been an adjustment for leaders to return to planning these live events and for us to again juggle travel arrangements, registration, and adjudication assignments, but what a reward to see and hear some outstanding singing and gather together again. All the finalists of the 2023 NSA will converge on San Diego and our host campus San Diego State University for the final round in conjunction with our NATS Summer Workshop. Make plans to join us now July 7-9th and check out the details elsewhere in this issue and on our [website](#).

Our commitment to expanding the canon of repertoire continues at this year’s Summer Workshop, so read about all the details and the great lineup of [presenters](#). Additionally, we will soon have more resources on our site curated by our team who brought you our “Expanding the Canon” premium workshop at our Chicago conference.

If you are looking for a longer professional development opportunity this summer, then I urge you to consider our inaugural [NATS Science-Informed Voice Pedagogy Institute](#) in Logan, Utah, June 25 – July 1. Lynn Holding and John Nix will

be joined by Amelia Rollings Bigler as clinicians. This team is committed to assisting all attendees in improving their studio teaching in all settings and/or teaching of the voice pedagogy sequence. Opportunities abound for feedback, conversation, and deeper understanding of the pillars of our work as voice teachers. I hope you will consider joining us.

If you can’t fit in a face-to-face experience this summer, I encourage you to visit the [NATS Live Learning Center](#) and explore the very affordable options for professional development available to you where you can customize your own experience. Better yet, grab a few friends in the same situation, choose some videos, and create a discussion group to deepen the experience.



Allen Henderson  
NATS Executive Director

NATS [recently announced](#) a major expansion of the National Student Auditions, nearly doubling the number of categories. This important initiative makes the audition experience available to a wider percentage of our membership and their students, namely children, pre-teens, and those passionate about genres outside the classical and musical theatre canon. Several committees are working to have all the resources you need to be successful in adjudicating these categories as well as preparing students for a quality NATS adjudication experience. We are thrilled to finally be able to expand auditions in these important directions and are grateful to all our leaders who are working to successfully implement these offerings. I hope you will share the news with your colleagues who are not yet NATS members and teach in these expanded areas. Encourage them to get involved in your chapter or region and bring their expertise to these events.

I hope the garden of voices you tend blooms spectacularly this spring. I always welcome your communications at [allen@nats.org](mailto:allen@nats.org).

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