

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* TEACHERS *of* SINGING



THE JUDITH CLOUD AWARD

NATS ART SONG COMPOSITION AWARD

Carol Monzell Mikkelsen has established the Judith Cloud Award for the 2024 Art Song Composition Award in memory of her dear friend. The purpose of the Art Song Composition Award program is to stimulate the creation of quality vocal literature through the cooperation of singer and composer.

Composer Judith Cloud's gift for vocal writing was born out of her own rich experiences as an accomplished mezzo-soprano soloist. Born in 1954 in Reidsville, NC, Cloud sang with her musical family in church services, where her first mentor, Dr. Ruth Graham, introduced her to music ranging from Bach to Britten. Later, Cloud entered the North Carolina School of the Arts, where she studied voice, conducting and composition. Her composition studies were with Robert Ward and Roy Johnson. Vocal instruction was with Janice Harsanyi, a champion of 20th-century American composers and an amateur composer, herself.

Cloud's music, built on romantic principles, is at once lyrical, rhythmically challenging and harmonically intriguing. Her catalog includes numerous vocal, choral and instrumental works. Most notable is her cantata Feet of Jesus set to poems by Langston Hughes. In 2009 she was awarded first place for the Sorel Medallion in Choral Composition with her piece for chorus and guitar, Anacreontics. Cloud has created a niche for herself as a composer of accessible and attractive art songs. She used her expertise as a vocal pedagogue for 40 years to create 24 Italian Songs and Arias for 21st Century Singers, a collection designed to assist voice teachers in assigning repertoire for students of all ages. With that goal in mind, she composed new melodies and accompaniments offering pedagogically sound principles with musically rewarding results.

Cloud received vocal performance degrees from the North Carolina School of the Arts and Florida State University where she studied with acclaimed soprano Janice Harsanyi. Her first composition lessons were with Robert Ward, who advised her to keep singing—but to keep writing music, too. She taught at Florida Community College at Jacksonville and Indiana State

University before moving to Flagstaff in 1989 where she joined the music faculty at Northern Arizona University as a voice teacher. She inspired students with her teaching as well as her compositional talents and was awarded "Teacher of the Year" for the College of Fine Arts in 2004. The honorary title of Professor Emerita was bestowed upon Cloud's retirement in 2020.

GIVING to NATS

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