

Donna Hinds Sawyers

Donna Hinds Sawyers serves on the voice faculty in the Department of Theatre and Musical Theatre at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX. She is co-founder and co-director of Studio Bella Voce, teaching both Classical and CCM (Contemporary Commercial Music) techniques. Specialties include musical theatre, opera, crossover technique and audition coaching.

Donna, in partnership with Laurie Lee Cosby, has authored a book entitled ***A Most Rewarding Independent Music Studio***. Published by Inside View Press, the book uses a workbook format and is designed for application to any music studio business.

Ms. Hinds Sawyers holds a Bachelor of Music, Music Education emphasis, and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from The University of Houston. She served apprenticeships with University of Houston Opera Studio under the direction of Buck Ross, and Aspen Opera Theatre directed by Edward Berkeley. She pursued studies in vocal pedagogy, mentored by Elisabeth Howard, creator of the Vocal Power Method and international clinician. Ms. Hinds Sawyers studied voice with W. Stephen Smith, Richard Barrett and Michael Trimble. Vocal coaches include Arlene Shrutt, Gary Arvin, and Kenneth Merrill. Other studies include art song with Paul Sperry, Lieder with Elena Nikolaidi and contemporary opera with Carlisle Floyd.

Ms. Hinds Sawyers is a well-known performer, teacher and music director in the Houston area. She is a frequent adjudicator and clinician for choral, musical theatre and classical vocal events. She served on the music faculty of Lone Star College for twenty-one years, teaching voice studies, music academics, and musical theatre. Ms. Hinds Sawyers spent four years in the country music arena, serving as studio coach at Fireside Studio in Nashville, TN.

Favorite opera roles performed include Mimi in *La Boheme*, The Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Alcina in *Alcina*, Baby Doe in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Susanna in *Il Segreto do Susanna*, and Miss Jessel in *The Turn of The Screw*. Stage roles include Maggie in *Dancing at Lughnasa*, Annelie in *Steel Magnolias*, and Rootie in *Graceland*. She has appeared as soprano soloist in concert and oratorio productions including *The Creation*, *Messiah*, *Carmina Burana*, Mozart's *Requiem* and *Coronation Mass*, and Bach's *Magnificat*.

Theatre credits include music direction/conducting of *Into the Woods*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Pippin*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Fantasticks*, *Godspell*, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cabaret*, and *Fifty Years of Broadway Revue*.

Recognitions include Academic Teaching Excellence Award, Lone Star College, and Kennedy Center Performance Award, American College Theatre Festival. Ms. Hinds Sawyers is certified in CCM methods Vocal Power, with Elisabeth Howard and Somatic Voicework ™ with Jeanette LoVetri. She holds the Texas All Level Certification in Music. She is an active member of NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) having been a presenter at the NATS National Conference in Nashville, and a board member of the Greater NATS Chapter.