

Voice Studio

Thursday, 24 May 2007

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Klein Choir takes great pride in its outstanding private voice faculty. These highly trained individuals have advanced degrees and are professional singers as well as instructors. Students who take private voice lessons are able to learn musicianship, vocal technique and repertoire more quickly than those who do not. The very affordable rates for private lessons are established by the Klein ISD Fine Arts Department.

Operatic Baritone Jim Baxter is pleased to call Klein High School his teaching home. Now based in Houston, Mr. Baxter's career as a soloist has taken him across the nation and Europe. Prominent venues have included the Mormon Tabernacle, Boston's Jordan Hall, and the Moore's Opera Center at the University of Houston where he appears regularly. As a young singer he won state NATS competitions in both Oklahoma and Montana, and was named the 2000 winner of the MTNA National voice competition.

Upon his high school graduation he had been awarded over \$250,000 in scholarship offers from leading schools of music and conservatories. In 2002 Mr. Baxter was awarded the Metropolitan Opera's Charlotte Green award. He has worked under such teachers as Richard Miller, Norman Bailey, and Katherine Ciesinski. Mr. Baxter is a section leader at St. Philip Presbyterian Church.

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Robin Cobb (Soprano, Voice) has performed many roles from the Lyric Soprano Musical Theater and Operatic repertoire. Most recently she performed the role of Orthlinde in Die Walkure for the Austin Lyric Opera; and as soprano soloist with the Colorado Symphony in Bernstein's Mass and Handel's Messiah. She has performed the Countess for the Austin Lyric Opera's production of The Marriage of Figaro, Donna Anna in Don Giovanni with the Cimmaron Circuit Opera Company, and Micaela in Carmen with Opera North. She also had the opportunity to perform the roles of Madeleine/Isabelle in the contemporary opera The Face on the Barroom Floor, also with Opera North. Her other roles

include Nedda in Pagliacci, Cleopatra in Julius Caesar, Angelica in Suor Angelica, Despina in Cosi Fan Tutte, First Lady in The Magic Flute, and Desiree in A Little Night Music, all with the University of Texas Opera Theatre.

Active in oratorio repertoire as well, she has also performed with the Santa Barbara Symphony, and the Austin Civic Orchestra as soprano soloist in the Mozart Requiem, Bach Christmas oratorio, Handel's Messiah, and the Haydn Lord Nelson Mass. She holds a B.A. and M.M. in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Texas at Austin. She currently resides in Houston, TX where she has a large teaching studio in the Northwest area. Ms. Cobb has been a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing for the past 10 years; and served as Co-Vice President of Auditions for the Houston chapter from 2002 – 2004. As an adjunct vocal faculty member at Sam Houston State University, she teaches both Vocal Performance and Musical Theater Majors. Her recently graduated musical theater student Ms. Katie Clarke recently starred on Broadway at the Vivienne Beaumont Theater as Clara in The Light in the Piazza through July of 2006. Ms. Cobb also served as music director for the Sam Houston State summer musical, Godspell.

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Laura Vacek, lyric soprano Ms. Vacek, an alumnus of Klein High School, is pleased to be returning to KHS as a voice teacher. Her operatic performances have included Laetitia and Nella in Gianni Schicchi, Angelica and Sorella Infermiera in Suor Angelica, Fiordiligi in Cosi fan Tutte, Gertrude in Hansel and Gretel, and Mrs. McLean in Susannah. She also enjoys performing oratorio and is frequently invited to perform as a featured soloist. In 2005, Ms. Vacek had the opportunity to travel to Venezuela and was a guest and featured soloist of one of Venezuela's National Orchestras.

She was awarded her BM in vocal performance cum laude in 2004 from Abilene Christian University in Abilene, TX where she studied with Julie Pruett. Ms. Vacek was the winner of Abilene Christian University's Nathan and Louise Harsh Scholarship Competition in 2002 and 2003 and won the ACU Concerto competition in 2004. She is currently a student of Jack Coldiron at Baylor University where she is a candidate for a MM in vocal performance. While at Baylor, Laura was awarded a graduate assistantship and taught voice lessons as well as class voice. She will graduate in December of 2007.

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Michael Vaughn, lyric-baritone, Mr. Vaughn is a Philadelphia native with a Master of Music degree from The University of Houston and dual Bachelor of Music degrees in Voice Performance and Music Education from Ithaca College. Mr. Vaughn has performed the title role in Eugene Onegin, Dr. Falke in Die Fledermaus, George Emerson in A Room With a View, The Poet in Il Turco in Italia, Pip in Miss Havisham's Fire, Prince Ottokar in Der Freischütz, The Jailor in Dialogues of the Carmelites , The Count in Cherubin, Pantalone in The Love for Three Oranges, and Marco in Gianni Schicchi. In concert Mr. Vaughn has performed the baritone solos of the Brahms Requiem, the Mozart Requiem, the Faure Requiem, and Vaughan Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem. In addition, Mr. Vaughn has sung several leading roles in Musical Theater productions.

In the 2006 - 2007 academic year many of Mr. Vaughn's students received ratings of "1" in solo/ensemble competitions - with some receiving the "Outstanding Performance" recognition, three were nominated for Tommy Tunes with one winner, and many participated in the region, area all-state, and all-state choirs.

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