

Andrea Morgan Matthews

Performing Artist

Teacher

Class of 1974



Andrea Morgan Matthews hopes it is still true at Needham High in 1999, as it was in the early 70s, that there are plenty of outlets for people who aren't the popular cheerleaders and athletes — people like her. She appreciated the opportunities at NHS for self-directed study, enjoying in particular the quarter- and half-year courses in English. She also liked being in the chorus and musicals, editing the literary magazine, *Even a Rag Like This*, and participating in "Model U.N."

Andrea's interests in history, languages, and singing and performing developed and were encouraged in high school. Mr. Lind's imaginative history class led her to major in history at Princeton University. She remembers studying Latin, French, Spanish, German, and a touch of Italian, languages that took on importance when she began to pursue a career in classical music. Mr. McKay's classes in English and theatre arts catalyzed her aptitude for the craft of acting. And, her education as a whole provided her the means to support herself by working as a proofreader and copyeditor during the years when she was preparing for her full-time career in music.

It wasn't until her junior year at Princeton, when she began to take voice lessons, that Andrea Morgan Matthews decided to pursue a career in singing. Then, after several years of learning and training, she won a second prize from the Opera Company of Boston, a grant from the National Institute for Music Theater, a national first prize from the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and a half dozen similar honors and awards.

A lyric soprano, Andrea has been a classical concert and opera singer full-time since 1985. She has performed extensively in Europe (including a two-year residency with the Aachen Opera) and across the United States with dozens of symphony orchestras and opera and dance companies, including the Detroit Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, the Stuttgart Philharmonic, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the Mostly Mozart Festival. She has performed with such renowned conductors as Sir Neville Marriner, Charles Dutoit, Robert Shaw, Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, and Neeme Jarvi. Her extensive list of recording includes Victor Herbert's *Thine Alone*, Ned Rorem's *Three Sisters*, and four operas by Handel.

Fairly recently, Andrea took up a second career to complement her professional life in music. She has completed training as a teacher of the Alexander Technique, a method of study that leads students to greater freedom and ease in movement and thinking. Included in the curricula of prominent schools like Juilliard and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, the Alexander Technique works to alleviate distortion and pain in the body and improve performance, whether artistic, athletic, or everyday, by changing how students think about, and thus go about, what they do.

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