

Melissa Rivera

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I. TEACHING

Music & Theatre Educator

2006 – Present

Freelance

CA, NC, PA, MO

- Prepare and present workshops and master classes for schools, theatre company education programs, and studios. Subjects include:
 - Traditional audition techniques
 - Safe space rehearsal
 - Theatre fundamentals
 - Vocal technique
 - Pop/rock musical methods
 - Self-tape and on-camera techniques
 - Private Voice
- Teach music theory fundamentals and vocal technique to students of all ages.
- Teach keyboard skills to aid students in personal practice sessions.
- Select age and type appropriate repertoire and exercises.
- Coach selections in preparation for auditions, performances, and repertoire book.

Summer Institute Director/Music Director

2019

Branson Regional Arts Council

Branson, MO

- Staged, choreographed, and taught music for the youth production of Shrek Jr.
- Managed two (2) casts of 80 students aged 5 – 18.
- Coordinated with assistant directors and producers to create age-appropriate workshops suitable for the show material, schedule rehearsals, and coordinate formal communication.
- Assisted students outside of group rehearsal time in areas of difficulty, e.g. recording vocal parts.
- Led vocal warm-ups and team building exercises.
- Assisted students with proper personal microphone placement.

- Teaching Artist** **2016**
Bay Area Children's Theatre *Oakland, CA*
- Traveled to Bay Area grade schools to perform "Rock the Block." An interactive musical production aimed to educate children about the importance of traffic safety.
- Young Audience Outreach Tour Teacher** **2013**
Creede Repertory Theatre *Creede, CO*
- Taught introductory classes on:
 - Risk
 - Improvisation
 - Laban movement
 - Workshopped scenes for upcoming productions.
 - High school aged students with up to 30 per class.
 - Travelled to schools throughout CO, NM, OK, and UT.
- Voice Instructor** **2012 – 2013**
Southern Illinois University Community Arts Outreach *Carbondale, IL*
- Taught music theory fundamentals and vocal technique to students aged 7 – mid 30s.
 - Chose age and type appropriate repertoire and exercises for each individual.
- Tutor** **2012 – 2013**
Troutt-Wittmann Academic Center *Carbondale, IL*
- Tutored college athletes. Subjects include:
 - Music Appreciation
 - Spanish
 - Writing and Research
 - Proof-read papers.
 - Exam, midterm, and finals preparation.
 - Taught students to find analytical approaches to writing academic papers.
 - Monitored the computer lab.
- Voice Instructor** **2008 – 2010**
Musika *Greensboro, NC*
- Taught music theory fundamentals and vocal technique to beginning school aged students
 - Chose age and type appropriate repertoire and exercises for each individual.
- Voice Instructor** **2006 – 2008**
Imagine Music Lessons *San Diego, CA*
- Taught music theory fundamentals and vocal technique to children
 - Chose age and type appropriate repertoire and exercises for each individual.
- Computer Lab Monitor** **2005 – 2008**
American Language Institute *San Diego, CA*
- Supervised international students' use of the computer lab.
 - Assisted with software issues.

II. CASTING

Freelance Casting Consultant

Forte Theatre Productions

2018 – 2019

Branson, MO

- Shared talent recommendations with the creative team and referred actors to their auditions for *Romeo & Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Of Mice and Men*.
- Provided feedback to the producer and assisted on final casting decisions.

Casting Director/Coordinator

Branson Regional Arts Council

2018

Branson, MO

- Lead casting director for the following productions:
 - *Legally Blonde*
 - *Little Shop of Horrors*
 - *Miracle on 34th Street*
 - *Beauty and the Beast*
- Liaison between the producers and creative team.
- Maintained a database of current and potential actors.
- Scouted and invited talent for review.
- Primary point of contact for actors for audition and production questions, and recipient of online submissions.
- Prepared and distributed audition materials based on the creative team's preferences.
- Read sides with actors in the audition room.
- Scheduled and organized auditions, emailed offers, and rejections.

Assistant Casting Director

Dena Martinez

2016

San Francisco, CA

- Facilitated ongoing casting for *The Speakeasy* produced by Boxcar Theatre.
- Organized and filed head shots, resumes, and information sheets.
- Chose audition material from the working script.
- Liaison between the lead casting director, show director, and producer to schedule audition dates and times as well as providing input on auditionees.
- Created proper audition spaces, greeted auditionees, and facilitated the audition process.

III. WORKSHOPS/CONTINUING EDUCATION

Rock the Audition Teacher Training Course

2020

Sheri Sanders

Remote/Online (via Zoom)

- 2-month course in which we studied all eight (8) pop/rock styles currently represented on Broadway and learned how to teach them to our students.
- How to choose pop/rock repertoire and cuts for musical theatre auditions.
- How to communicate with accompanists and present music.
- How to use the camera for a self-tape submission.

Sheri Sanders Masterclass Participant

2016

National Association of Teachers of Singing

Pennsylvania

- *Rock the Audition* overview.
- Focused on how to choose pop/rock repertoire and cuts for pop/rock musical auditions from Motown, 70's, 80's, country, and faeries genres.
- Sang *Mama's Broken Heart* by Miranda Lambert for the country portion.

Headwaters Festival Participant

2013

Creede Repertory Theatre

Creede, CO

- Workshopped and performed a stage reading of *Lullaby Bay: A Musical for Brave Children* by Jeff Carey & Jessica Jackson.
- Read the role of *Pearl* and provided vocals for *Shelly*.

Edrie Means Weekly Masterclass Participant

2011

National Association of Teachers of Singing

Mid-Atlantic Region

- Contemporary commercial music. Belt techniques for musical theatre and commercial music.
- Sang "Maybe I Like it This Way" from Andrew Lipa's *The Wild Party*.

Intensive Ensemble Member

2010

LABrynth Theater Company

New York

- Weeklong intensive course designed to exercise and stimulate all aspects of theatre.
- Playwriting, scenic design, storytelling through song, movement, relaxation techniques, play analysis, art creation.
- *Instructors included:* Philip Seymour Hoffman, Daphne Rubin Vega, Maggie Flanigan, Stephen Adly Guirgis, Andrea Ciannevi.

Summer Acting Collaborative Member

2009

Paper Lantern Theatre Company

Winston-Salem, NC

- Focused on character development and script approach using Meisner and Stanislavsky methods taught by several guest teachers and applied them to scenes from plays.

Shoshana Bean Masterclass Participant

2008

San Diego State University, Music & Theater Departments

San Diego, CA

- Honest storytelling through song.
- Sang "Still Hurting" from Jason Robert Brown's *The Last 5 Years*.

Barry Green Masterclass Participant

2007

San Diego State University, Music Department, NATS San Diego Chapter, and California Association of Professional Music Teachers (District 1) *San Diego, CA*

- *The Inner Game of Music*
- Designed to help musicians overcome obstacles, improve concentration, and reduce nervousness to heighten performance.
- Sang “The Beauty Is” from Adam Guettel’s *The Light in the Piazza*.

Mary Saunders-Barton Masterclass Participant

2006

San Diego State University, Music & Theatre Departments

San Diego, CA

- *Bel Canto can Belto*
- Musical theatre belting techniques.
- Sang “There’s a Fine, Fine Line” from Lopez & Marx’s *Avenue Q*.

IV. EDUCATION

Master of Music in Opera and Music Theater Performance **2013**

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL

Document title: "Changes Made to Andrew Lippa's The Wild Party: Maybe [He] Likes it This Way"

Committee: Dr. Jeanine Wagner (Chair), Tim Fink, Susan Patrick Benson

Bachelor of Music in Voice **2008**

San Diego State University, CA

Bachelor of Arts in Spanish **2008**

San Diego State University, CA

Study Abroad Program **2007**

Universidad Antonio de Nebrija, Madrid, Spain

- Spanish Theatrical Literature and Spanish history

V. COMMUNITY SERVICE **2018 – 2019**

Branson Regional Arts Council

Branson, MO

- Served as secretary on the Advisory Committee for the Board of Directors.
- Assistant Producer for *Legally Blonde*.
- Props master for several main stage productions.
- Assisted with set up and take down.

Forte Theatre Productions **2017 – 2019**

Assistant Producer

Branson, MO

- Facilitated brainstorm sessions, outreach, and marketing.
- Director and emcee of the *Love Is...* and *Groovy Broadway* cabarets.
- Assisted with set up and take down of shows.

Crosswinds Church **2016**

Youth Drama Team Coordinator

Pleasanton, CA

- Wrote and directed skits based on the sermon series for students to perform during services.
- Lead workshops on risk, improvisation, and movement.
- Middle school and high school aged students with groups of 2 – 7 students per skit or workshop.

American Language Institute **2005 – 2008**

Conversation Partner

- Engaged with international college students on a weekly basis to practice conversational American English.
- Socialized in common American outings and discussed cultural comparisons.
- Monitored computer lab hours.

VI. PUBLICATIONS/PODCAST APPEARANCES

Tenacious Talk with Carlos Mendoza

2021

- “Despite Broadway and theatre productions being temporarily closed, actor/singer Melissa Rivera finds ways to express herself! Listen in as Melissa shares her perspective on the state of musical theatre, her audition masterclasses, and some of her artistic goals for 2021.”

Classical Singer Magazine

2019

- Melissa Rivera’s Success with Crossover Vocal Training by Michelle Latour
Crossover singing should extend beyond musical theatre styles. Pop, rock, and country music can also lead to additional opportunities and paychecks. Biographical interview article about shining a light on professional singing opportunities outside of musical theatre and opera.

Classical Singer Magazine

2012

- The Path Less Traveled? by Michelle Latour
Chosen as one of “three classically trained singers who have successfully transitioned into musical theatre to share insight for others wishing to do the same.”

VII. CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Unified Professional Theatre Auditions (UPTAs)

Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC)

Kentucky Regional Auditions

Straw Hat

Twin City Auditions

Theatre Bay Area Auditions (TBAs)

HONORS AND AWARDS

Branson’s Best, Best Tribute Show, *Legends in Concert*

2019

Piedmont Triad Theatre Guild, Best Leading Actress, Wendla Bergman

-Winston Salem Theatre Alliance production of *Spring Awakening*

2012

NATS* Northeastern Regionals 1st place winner, Musical Theatre division

2011

NATS* Greensboro, NC 2nd place winner, Musical Theatre division

2010

NATS* San Diego 3rd place winner, Musical Theatre division

2008

NATS* San Diego 2nd place winner, Musical Theatre division

2007

* National Association of Teachers of Singing

AFFILIATIONS

Delta Gamma Sorority, Epsilon Sigma Chapter

- Vice President of Member Education, 2006-2007
- Philanthropy director, 2005
- Song leader, 2004

LANGUAGES

English – Fluent native speaker

Spanish – Fluent native speaker

VII. OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Bilingual Voice Over Actor

2019 – Present

Freelance

NY, CA, MO

- Spanish and English language commercials, educational materials, and artistic projects.
- Home set up.

Hispanic Outreach Program Leader

2018 – 2019

Branson Bank

Branson, MO

- Create educational presentations to educate bank associates on proper communication with Hispanic customers.
- Created and implemented a strategic plan to reach members of the local Hispanic community.
- Aided in the access to Spanish informational material.
- Offered advice and insight to the president and branch manager on Spanish education tools to better serve the Hispanic community.
- Offered translation and interpretation services to Spanish speaking customers.

Collector/Customer Service Representative

2009 – 2011

Greensboro Pathology Associates

Greensboro, NC

- Provided interpretation services for Spanish speaking patients.
- Answered phones and directed calls.
- Skip searched for phone numbers, addresses, and other personal information related to cases.
- Processed insurance information and payments.
- Categorized diagnosis codes.
- Ran and submitted insurance claims.

Bilingual Agent

2008 – 2009

RESOLVE Partners, LLC

Greensboro, NC

- Translated letters and contracts from English to Spanish.
- Provided interpretation services to debtors.
- Skip searched for phone numbers, addresses, and other personal information related to cases.
- Processed payments.
- Communicated with property managers and negotiated discounts and percentages.
- Established and reviewed payment plans with tenants.
- Reviewed and submitted information to credit bureaus.

Music Library/Administrative Assistant

2006

San Diego State University, School of Music and Dance

San Diego, CA

- Monitored calls and answered questions regarding the department.
- Kept track of semester recital attendance for all music major students at the university.
- Organized and filed various formats of physical recordings.
- Managed library database of recording locations and detailed information.