

VOCAL STUDIES & CURTIS OPERA THEATRE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

All details subject to change and revision

Welcome to Vocal Studies and Curtis Opera Theatre at Curtis Institute of Music. This handbook is a supplement to the Academic Catalog of Curtis Institute of Music with information specific to our department. Please use this document as a reference and guide throughout the year.

2024 – 2025 SEASON SUMMARY

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
October 18, 2024	<i>Department Recital</i>	Gould Hall
November 1, 2, 3, 2024	<i>The Comet / Poppea</i>	23 rd St Armory
November 11 –15, 2024	<i>J'Nai Bridges Residency</i>	
November 15, 2024	<i>Greene Space Performance with J'Nai Bridges</i>	Greene Space, NYC
December 9 – 13, 2024	<i>Karen Slack Residency</i>	
December 9, 2024	<i>Karen Slack Master Class</i>	Field Hall
December 11, 2024	<i>Barbara Hannigan Master Class</i>	Field Hall
January 13 – 17, 2025	<i>Amanda Majeski Residency</i>	
January 15, 2025	<i>Amanda Majeski Master Class</i>	Gould Hall
February 3 – 7, 2025	<i>John Relyea Residency</i>	
February 6, 2025	<i>John Relyea Master Class</i>	Field Hall
February 12, 2025	<i>Department Recital</i>	Field Hall
February 27, 28, and March 1, 2, 2025	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Perelman Theater, Kimmel
April 11 & 13, 2025	<i>Candide</i>	The Forrest Theater
May 9 & 10, 2025	<i>Savior & Infernal Angel, CNME Concert</i>	Gould Hall

***Additional performances, master classes, recitals may be announced throughout the year.*

DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION

Administrative Offices: 1726 Locust Street, 3rd floor – up the ramp across from room II-D

MILOŠ REPICKÝ

Director and Hirsig Family Chair in Vocal Studies & Opera

Milos.repicky@curtis.edu, 646.415.2428 (cell)

Studio II-F

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*Senior Director of Administration & Operations,
Vocal Studies & Curtis Opera Theatre*

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Opera Office, 1726 Locust Third Floor

KEITH OBAZA

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ISABEL TAGUE

Associate, Vocal Studies & Curtis Opera Theatre

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ERIC OWENS

Head of Voice and Opera

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FACULTY & MUSIC STAFF

OPERA & VOCAL COACHING | ROLE PREPARATION | REPERTOIRE

MILOŠ REPICKÝ

ERIC OWENS

SUSAN NOWICKI

GRANT LOEHNIG

LISA KELLER

REESE REVAK

TING TING WONG

JIN HYUN PARK

NIKOLAY VEREVKIN

LANGUAGE COACHING

STEFANO BALDASSERONI

Italian

MATTHIEU COGNET

French

MILOŠ REPICKÝ

Czech

ULRIKE SHAPIRO

German

NIKOLAY VEREVKIN

Russian

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

COMMUNICATION

How will we communicate with you?

All written communication will be sent to your Curtis.edu email. Please check it frequently. We will not use personal emails unless it is an emergency. At times, the office may need to reach you by phone. Please submit your cell phone number on the form provided. This is *for internal use only*. We will not share or distribute your number outside the admin office.

How can you communicate with us?

We recommend primarily communicating with us via the email addresses above. Additionally, the phone numbers provided connect to our cell phones. You may also drop by our office on the 3rd floor of 1726 Locust Street. During the school year, the office is typically staffed daily. If we are working remotely or out of office, a note on our door will direct you how to reach us.

Miloš or Eric may communicate with you via text message. Texting is at their discretion. Please do not text any other members of the administrative team. Phone, text, and email after hours may result in delayed responses until the next business day. If it is an emergency, please tell us.

We welcome your questions and concerns and are here to support you during your time at Curtis! If you'd like to discuss anything more in depth or privately, you may make an appointment with Miloš or Laura.

Weekly Department Email

The Weekly Vocal Studies Email will be sent every Friday. This email officially releases the weekly schedule, shares upcoming performance details, communicates information or reminders, and shares news with our community. Please read carefully to follow the rhythm of the department.

VOCAL STUDIES WEEKLY SCHEDULE

The weekly schedule includes voice lessons, coachings, classes, music rehearsals, and production staging blocks for the operas. You will engage in individual and/or group coachings with our faculty each week. Your coaching schedule is tailored to your personal requests/goals, performance preparation, and pedagogical growth.

Communication is essential to building a successful schedule each week. **Please maintain a clear, consistent dialogue with Miloš regarding your pedagogical priorities. We will work to honor and support those needs with coaching at the appropriate times throughout the year.**

The weekly schedule is built Tuesday -Thursday for the following week and is released by Friday afternoon. The schedule is shared via **ASIMUT**, a software connected to your Curtis.edu email address, and contains information on your academic classes, rehearsals, and coachings. **To view your schedule, please visit curtis.asimut.net or curtis.asimut.net/mobile on your cell phone.**

PLEASE NOTE: Though visible on Asimut, your schedule is not final until the weekly email is sent, and changes may be made up to that time.

Submitting Personal Coaching Requests and Assigned Coachings

You are encouraged to make coaching requests bi-weekly. **Requests must be submitted by Tuesday at 10:00 am for the following two weeks. Please submit via email only to Isabel.** You may coach with any of the faculty listed in this document.

You may request an unlimited number of coachings weekly, however due to availability, rehearsals, priorities, and academics, not all requests may be granted. If a certain coaching is of high priority, please detail that in your submission.

Faculty and guest conductors also submit requests bi-weekly. At the discretion of the department, you may be scheduled for these additional sessions. Everything is visible on ASIMUT.

Schedule Conflicts & Cancellation Policies for Coaching

What warrants cancelling a coaching?

Coachings should be cancelled for illness, an unforeseen production conflict, an academic conflict, or a last-minute release request. Please consult Isabel if you are unsure about cancelling. You can often accomplish much without singing and it may prove beneficial to maintain a session.

If I need to cancel, what is the procedure? Does it get rescheduled?

Please email Isabel to cancel your coaching. **Do not exchange sessions with another student or cancel directly with your coach.** If it is less than 24 hours before your session, please copy your coach and pianist (if applicable) on your email. **Do not email your coach and pianist to cancel without Isabel on copy.** Best efforts will be made to reschedule at a mutually convenient time. If cancellation occurs less than 24 hours before the session, it will remain on Asimut for accounting purposes.

For bookkeeping purposes, all proposed changes to the schedule must pass through Isabel and the administrative office.

Please Note: Cancelling a coaching(s) with Isabel does not excuse you from Vocal department classes on a given day. **You must speak with John Giampietro (Acting) or Miloš (Seminar) directly about an absence for either of those classes.**

Where will my coaching take place?

All coachings happen on campus in the Vocal Studies studios on the 3rd floor of 1726 Locust Street unless otherwise noted on Asimut. Coachings will not be remote unless there is a special circumstance.

VOICE LESSONS

Each singer receives thirty (30) lessons each year. There are no lessons during exam weeks or school breaks.

Lessons will be scheduled by Isabel in consultation with the voice faculty and are released in the weekly schedule. Lessons will occur at a regular weekly time as much as possible.

Voice faculty must teach in-person but can also teach in a hybrid structure. You will see a notation for a remote lesson on your Asimut (labeled “virtual” in the event info). For a remote lesson, the department has provided computers, speakers, and microphones. There is one (1) laptop/computer with a webcam, one (1) set of speakers, and one (1) microphone in both Tabuteau and Salzedo. **These devices MUST remain in these rooms unless otherwise directed by Isabel.** If you would like to use your own devices, you may do so. An on-campus room and pianist is booked even if the teacher is remote. **All vocal lessons must occur on Curtis’ campus regardless of being virtual or in-person.** It is the student’s responsibility to call into their lesson on time using the teacher’s preferred method of communication.

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding your lessons to Miloš.

Voice Lesson Cancellation Protocol and Policy

The following policies and procedures will apply:

Missed lesson due to a student’s Release Request:

- If a student files a Release Request (Performance or Personal/Medical) that overlaps with their weekly lesson time, the lesson for that week will be forfeit and counted towards your total.
- **No make-up lesson will be scheduled.**

Cancellation by voice teacher:

- Written communication will be sent by Isabel to the student
- A makeup lesson will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time

*Cancellation by student with **more than 24 hours’ notice** before the scheduled lesson:*

- Cancellation must be made via email, so it is documented
- Isabel will work to schedule a makeup lesson if cancellation is deemed excused
- Excused absences include an illness that develops well in advance of the weekly lesson, an approved release request, a special circumstance as approved by the department or Dean, or an unforeseen production conflict

*Cancellation by student **with less than 24 hours’ notice**:*

- Immediate communication of this cancellation must be sent to Isabel via email and phone to be sure your teacher is notified quickly
- **A makeup lesson will not be scheduled, and the missed lesson will count toward the total**
- Documentation, such as a doctor’s note excusing you from classes, may be requested

OPERA SEMINARS & ACTING CLASS

Both Opera Seminar and Acting are foundational courses that are integral to your curriculum and education at Curtis. Scheduled at the same time each week, **your attendance is mandatory** unless you are released or have another excused absence via the administrative office or the Dean.

Opera Seminar is most frequently led by Miloš, music staff or guests. Opera Seminar offers students the opportunity to perform and coach repertoire in front of peers.

Acting is taught by John Matsumoto Giampietro. These courses provide a dramatic foundation for the singer and introduce key techniques that enhance your performance education.

Both classes meet in-person at 1726 Locust Street and occur in sections. Your class time and location will be listed on Asimut. Coaching to supplement your work in these classes can be requested and will be granted when possible.

USE OF IPHONE/IPAD AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of iPhones, iPads and/or other electronic devices for recording - both audio and video - is prohibited during classes and rehearsals unless cleared with the faculty or guest artists in the room. Recording yourself as a learning tool is permitted with permission. **Recording others is not allowed.**

Use of these devices for texting and calls is permitted only during breaks. Devices should remain off or be put on silent/do not disturb during classes/rehearsals/coaching.

If you have any questions about these policies, please speak with Laura or Miloš.

RELEASE REQUESTS

Release requests are the process by which students can request approved absences from school. These are granted for either personal/medical reasons or for professional performance opportunities.

The proper paperwork must be filed **at least two weeks in advance** unless there are extenuating circumstances. **Release request forms are not for last-minute or day-of absences.**

Releases are reviewed by Miloš, Laura and the Release Committee and will always be given reasonable consideration. Every effort will be made to grant requests that align with your academic responsibilities and Curtis performance requirements.

Please note: An email to Isabel to block off time in your schedule **consisting of more than one hour does not constitute a release**, neither does a conversation with Laura or Miloš. **You must file the correct forms to ensure you are approved for the releases you are requesting.** If you do not see an approved release in your Asimut, you are not released. If a release is denied, you will receive an email. Once a release has been approved, it will be visible (with the parameters specified) in your Asimut calendar.

You must file your form **by Monday morning at 5pm at the latest** for a release happening in the next week. If you miss this deadline, you must email Laura for next steps. If approved, you will be directed to complete the proper form.

Please review the policies and procedures for releases [via the Curtis portal](#). The portal provides comprehensive information on how to file a release, how many releases you are granted in a given academic year, and the forms to complete.

Any questions or conversations regarding prospective releases must go through Laura.

PRODUCTIONS

Productions are an integral part of your education at Curtis and your participation garners an academic grade each year. Vocal Studies students will perform throughout the season in recitals, scenes programs, masterclasses, with the CSO, and in three mainstage Operas. Performance opportunities vary by season.

We expect that you enter each of your performance opportunities with professionalism and an openness to learning and gaining valuable experience that will enhance your career after Curtis.

Who works on the productions?

The whole administrative team works on the productions. However, your first point of contact for logistical and rehearsal related questions should be Keith Obaza, Director of Production. For questions of an artistic nature, please contact Miloš. Outside of the Curtis team, our productions are staffed by professional artists working in the field – this includes directors, conductors, designers, and stage management team.

The Rehearsal Room

Students and guest artists are expected to behave in a manner consistent with Curtis's values. We ask that you are respectful, open, communicative, collaborative, supportive, and conduct yourselves with integrity. Guest artists are expected to do the same.

If you encounter a situation that is not consistent with these expectations, please speak with Stage Management first. Their job is to manage the room in real time. Stage management will direct any concerns to Keith. Keith will address any issues with Laura and Miloš and next steps will be determined. If you cannot address your concerns with stage management, you are encouraged to contact Keith, Miloš, or Laura via phone, email, or in-person appointment *at any time*.

If you do not want to voice your observation directly, you may use the online Anonymous Production Feedback Form distributed at the start of each production. Survey responses will be checked daily by the administrative team and feedback will be addressed as soon as possible. (Please see below for more information.)

Rehearsal Schedules

During staging, opera rehearsals are generally scheduled Monday – Friday from 6 – 10 pm and Saturdays from 11 – 1, 2 – 6 pm. **Schedules will vary and may involve longer days during tech and performance week.** When you are cast in an opera, please expect to be called to rehearsal during these windows of time. You should not commit to other things until it is confirmed that you are not required at rehearsal.

Best efforts will be made to call you only when needed to avoid idle time. However, this may be unavoidable due to the scale of rehearsing an opera. We appreciate your cooperation and hope you can find alternate ways to use this time to supplement your education. Observation of the staging or musical work and/or completing homework or assignments is encouraged.

Excused Absence from Class Due to Tech

Schedules will vary during tech and performance week, meaning you may miss an academic class. If you have been granted an **approved absence** from an academic class, you will be notified via Laura and the Dean's office detailing the parameters of this absence. You must be in touch with your teacher and make up the work missed in a timely manner. **Failure to do so will impact your grade.**

If you do not receive notification of an approved absence, you have not been released and are required to attend classes as normal. If you have any questions about this policy, please speak to Laura.

Schedule Distribution

Schedules will be blocked in Asimut weekly to hold your time; however, changes can happen *daily* in the rehearsal room rendering Asimut inaccurate. **You must refer to the DAILY SCHEDULE distributed by Stage Management for your actual calls. The daily schedule will always supersede Asimut.**

You are expected to know your call times and manage your schedule to ensure that you are not late or absent from rehearsal. This includes planning time for meals. If there is a scheduling oversight and you do not have a meal break, please speak to Laura and Isabel.

Anonymous Production Feedback Form

The Production Feedback Form is monitored daily while in production. This form is completed anonymously and allows students to share any feedback you may prefer to communicate privately. Use of this form is **completely optional**. Please allow at least 48 hours for any items to be addressed. The link to the form remains live all season and will be linked in the Weekly email during production time.

The link can also be found here: [Production Anonymous Feedback Form](#)

Venues

Curtis Opera Theatre will be performing at the 23rd Street Armory, Kimmel Center's Perelman Theater, and The Forrest Theatre this season. Please see below for instructions on how to navigate each venue.

23rd Street Armory

The main entrance to the Armory is located on 23rd Street between Chestnut and Market Streets. The exact address is 22 S 23rd St, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Proceed through the entrance toward the back of the venue where you will see offices with military vehicles in front. To the back lefthand corner will be a staircase leading to the downstairs holding area that will also be where wardrobe and hair/makeup operate.

Additional holding area will be on the ground level in a pipe and drape enclosure close to the stage.

Perelman Theater

The stage door entrance for the Kimmel Center is located at 321 S. 15th Street. This is right next to the loading dock entrance.

You will go up a flight of steps and enter through a pair of glass doors that will lead to the security desk. From there, check in with security (they will have your name on a list) and they will proceed to buzz you backstage.

This leaves you backstage at Verizon Hall, so it's a little bit of a walk to Perelman. Make your first immediate right down the hallway toward the Verizon Hall stage. When you get to the end of the hallway, make another right onto the blue tile toward the loading dock. When you get to the end of this hallway, make a left to go through another set of doors that leads to the dock. These doors will all be green lighted so you should be able to open the door without a swipe card. Through this door, follow the dock straight to the end and go through the set of doors there. This will leave you backstage in Perelman. Refer to signage posted by stage management as to your dressing room's location.

If you run into any issues, you can always go back to security for immediate assistance.

The Forrest Theatre

Head east on Locust Street towards Broad Street. Continue to follow Locust until you come to Quince Street, located between 12th and 11th Streets. Take a left onto Quince Street and then follow signs leading you to the stage door entrance. There will be a security guard at the desk inside that will have your name on a list. Once checked in with security, proceed to your assigned dressing room.

RESOURCES

Please familiarize yourself with the numerous student services available, including mental health resources, Title IX support, and wellness programs. For more information, please see the Curtis Portal.

The department often receives audition notifications and other mailings that may interest you as young professionals in the field. There is a large bulletin board on the 3rd floor where this literature will be posted for reference. We will also send emails with relevant notifications that we receive.

2024-2025 HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

I have read the Vocal Studies & Curtis Opera Theatre Handbook and agree to adhere to the policies, values, and procedures outlined.

PRINT NAME _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

REQUESTED PERSONAL DETAILS

CELL PHONE # _____

PERSONAL EMAIL FOR EMERGENCIES _____

BIRTHDAY _____

PRONOUNS _____