

FACT SHEET

KATHRYN WHITNEY

- Raised on Vancouver Island. Trained in Canada, USA and England. Canadian citizen; British national.
- Began music lessons at Victoria Conservatory of Music (singing and piano). Singing teacher: Carla Levinson.
- Received further training in Toronto, New York, Oxford and London, England.
- Formal education: Arts & Science BA in Music and German Language, University of Toronto; Masters (MPhil) Doctorate (DPhil) in Music from University of Oxford in England; Postgraduate Diploma in Vocal Performance (PGDipPerf) from Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, England.
- While studying in Toronto, travelled to New York during the vacations for private lessons with vocal pedagogue and author, Cornelius Reid. While studying in Oxford, took two years of private lessons in London with famous English soprano Emma Kirkby.
- Principal singing teacher: Susan McCulloch (London), Professor of singing at Guildhall School of Music and at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. Also currently studies privately with well-known English mezzo-soprano Catherine Wynn-Rogers.
- Has taken lessons and coachings in Canada with Carol Forte (Toronto), Selena James, Robert Holliston, Joan Patenaude-Yarnell (Victoria) and Peter Barcza (Vancouver).
- Completed Oxford doctorate in 1999; completed Guildhall Postgraduate Diploma in Vocal Performance in 2001.
- Subject of doctoral dissertation: music aesthetics. Topic: the use of indeterminacy, or chance procedures, in the music of post-war composers Pierre Boulez and John Cage. Definitions of “the musical work”.
- Sang in international masterclasses in Canada and the UK with Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Emma Kirkby, Stuart Hamilton, Timothy Vernon, Rudolf Jansen, Elly Ameling, Laura Sarti, Nancy Argenta, Robin Bowman, Susan McCulloch, Richard Jackson, Theresa Cahill, Margaret Field, Henry Herford, Lillian Watson, among others.
- Attended numerous residential singing courses, including Abingdon Summer School for Solo Singers (Oxfordshire, England), Jackdaws Musical Trust (Somerset, England), Mountain View International Festival of Song and Chamber Music (Calgary, Alberta), Victoria Conservatory of Music Summer Vocal Academy (Victoria, BC), Oxford Vocalists English Song Weekend (Oxford, England) and Opera Nuova (Edmonton, Alberta).
- Scholarships for study at University of Oxford (all from University of Oxford): Halstead Scholarship, Lady Margaret Hall Graduate Scholarship, Somerville College Graduate Scholarship. Also received Overseas Research Scholarship from the British Council.
- Awards and Scholarships for study at Guildhall School of Music: Postgraduate Arts Award from the Worshipful Company of Drapers’ of London, Margaret Pollock Scholarship from Somerville College, Oxford.
- Elected Wolfson Creative Arts Fellow, or ‘Artist in Residence’, at the University of Oxford, 2002-2005. Wolfson patronage includes room and board in Oxford, plus stipend to cover all singing-related expenses for three years. Information: www.wolfson.ox.ac.uk/creativearts.
- Released first recital disk, ‘An Autumn Evening of English Song’, with pianist Peter Smith in 2004.
- First concert tour in Canada: ‘The Island Tour 2004’, a self-produced 7-city English song recital tour of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. (Information: www.kathrynwhitney.net/tour.) Separate recital also in Vancouver. Partnered by local pianists Peter Smith, Lynn Robinson, Charlotte Hale and Ronald Morgan.

- Second British Columbia Tour in 2005: return dates – all of them invited by established music series – in Victoria, Nanaimo, Campbell River and Vancouver, partnered by pianists Charlotte Hale and Ronald Morgan.
- Sang English song recital tour in Southern England in 2004, sponsored by the Vale of White Horse Touring Council, partnered by London pianist Michael Brownlee-Walker.
- Sang début recital in London, England at the prestigious and historic St John’s Smith Square in Westminster in March 2005 partnered by Wigmore Young Artist, pianist Lindy Tennant-Brown.
- First Canadian provincial showcase appearance: Organisation of Saskatchewan Arts Councils (OSAC) Stars for Saskatchewan Showcase in October 2005.
- Appearance at 2005 OSAC showcase supported by a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts.
- OSAC tour of Saskatchewan in April 2007, with concerts for Regina Musical Club, Melfort Arts Council, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre (pianist Charlotte Hale). Also singing at Lyle Victor Albert Centre in Bonnyville, Alberta.
- Selected to showcase on the Mainstage at Pacific Contact 2007, the professional booking conference of the British Columbia Touring Council for the Performing Arts, in Vancouver in April 2007.
- Has sung 16 world and national premières in Canada and Britain, many of pieces written expressly for her voice.
- While studying at Oxford and at the Guildhall School of Music, held part-time college lectureships at University of Oxford, Cambridge University and at the Royal Academy of Music in London (taught music history and aesthetics).
- Maintains private singing studios in Canada and in the UK. Also teaches music at New College, Lady Margaret Hall, and Brasenose College, Oxford.
- Invited to give a series of masterclasses on English Song for undergraduate and postgraduate singers at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, the National Conservatoire of Wales, Spring 2007.
- Received honour of high-profile commission from Arts Council of England, Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust, British PRS Foundation for New Music and Wolfson College, Oxford in 2005. New work titled ‘Heloise to Abelard’, a 20-minute scena for mezzo-soprano and piano by British composer John McCabe, CBE, completed in May, 2005, published in June 2005 by Novello & Co international music publishers.
- Canadian composer Lorna Paterson received commission from audience member (unknown to her or Kathryn Whitney) to compose new work for Kathryn in 2004. Song cycle ‘Three Sylvia Plath Songs’ completed 2005.
- Other works recently written for Kathryn include: two song cycles by British composer Susan Wollenberg: ‘The Survivor’, 2004 (5 songs to texts on Holocaust survival by Primo Levi) and ‘Alles auf der Welt ist Wandel’ [Everything in the world is change], 2005; extended piece for mezzo and piano by British composer John Caldwell titled ‘En una noche oscura’ (2007) and a new song cycle ‘Untitled’ by Oxford composer David Maw (2007)
- Operatic roles include Dido, The Sorceress (Dido & Aeneas), Cherubino (Nozze di Figaro), Second Lady (Die Zauberflöte), Dinah (Trouble in Tahiti), Storgè (Jephtha), Hata (Bartered Bride); Repertoire also includes well over 300 solo songs.
- Fach: lyric mezzo-soprano
- Regularly performs benefit concerts, with special interest in the Doctors in Africa program of AMREF, an African AIDS Charity

Further information: www.kathrynwhitney.net