

# Melanie Mitrano

## Soprano

**Melanie Mitrano** is an active performer, teacher, composer, lecturer and writer who specializes in new music and crossover repertoire. Both her vocal and compositional styles range from classical to Broadway to jazz. She is especially committed to hybrid music, which combines elements of several musical styles at once.

Melanie has the distinction of being the first woman to receive a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the New England Conservatory in Boston, and also holds an MM and BM in vocal performance from the Eastman School of Music. Her critically-acclaimed debut CD, *Songs in Transit*, was released on Capstone records in 2006. It features repertoire which unites musical theater, blues, jazz, hip-hop and world music styles within a classical framework. Such notable American composers as Lee Hoiby, Tom Cipullo and Lori Laitman, as well as Pulitzer-Prize-winning composers David Del Tredici and Paul Moravec are heard accompanying the singer at the piano.

Dr. Mitrano has worked with many other esteemed composers, including György Ligeti, Luciano Berio, and John Harbison. In Manchester, England, she gave the world premieres of selected 20th-century Lieder at the second *Perspectives on Anton Bruckner* conference; and toured Japan and Taiwan, premiering the choral music of Earl Kim. She was a founding member of the Boston-based *Auros Group for New Music* and has sung with similar groups in the New York area, including *Speculum Musicae*, *Ensemble 21*, *The Crosstown Ensemble*, *The Downtown Chamber Players*, and *Friends & Enemies of New Music*.

With *Absolute Ensemble*, she recorded the film score for the award-winning movie *Perfume*, directed by Tom Tykwer and starring Dustin Hoffmann and Alan Rickman. Her voice appears in the film and on the EMI movie soundtrack. She will soon be heard in the Manta Ray Pictures film *Anomaly*, written and directed by independent filmmaker Terry Wickham.

Melanie has sung under the auspices of American Opera Projects, and made her solo Carnegie Hall debut in 2004. That same year, she won first place in the New Jersey NATS Artist Award Competition, and second place in the Joyce Dutka Arts Foundation Art Song Competition. She has sung in conjunction with the *Composers Concordance* and the *Guild of Composers*, under whose sponsorship she made her Merkin Hall recital debut in 1996; and premiered student and faculty compositions at Yale, NYU, NEC, Columbia University, MIT, The New School of Music, and the Symposium for Arts and Technology at Connecticut College. Dr. Mitrano premiered the role of Harriett Shelley in Allan Jaffe's new American opera, *Mary Shelley*, presented at the New York Society for Ethical Culture. With *Sound Liberation*, she appeared in the premiere of Gene Pritsker's techno-rock opera *Money* at the Flea Theater and The Players Theater in Manhattan. In May 2008, she gave the Italian premiere of this work at Etnafest in Catania, Sicily.

As a composer, Melanie performs her original works in a variety of venues. Her classical song cycle, *Phobias and Infatuations*, has been performed in recital at Symphony Space, and also featured on a concert of the New York Women's Composers in 2006. She was recently a guest composer/performer with the Diane Moser Composers Big Band at Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair. A new disc of her jazz compositions is slated to be released by Parma Records in 2009.

Dr. Mitrano began her teaching career at Connecticut College in New London; and from 1996-2001, served on the faculty of New Jersey City University as Coordinator of Vocal Studies. A dedicated educator and frequent clinician, she has lectured at several NJMEA state conferences, high schools, and universities, including the Mannes College of Music, Western Connecticut State University, Kutztown University, Brooklyn College, and the University of New Hampshire. She has served as an adjudicator for the NJ NATS Festival of Singing and the National Federation of Music Clubs. Since 1999, Dr. Mitrano has been a member of the editorial board of *The New Music Connoisseur*, a Manhattan-based journal dedicated to the advancement of contemporary music. Her articles have been published in *NMC*, as well as *Tempo Magazine*, the MENC international edition of *Spotlight on Teaching Chorus*, and the *NATS Journal of Singing*. Currently, she maintains a busy private voice studio in New Jersey, and pursues a free-lance performing career.