

PROFESSIONAL OPERA SINGER

Molly Noori

and her non-traditional path to success



Overview

The journey to becoming a professional in the classical music world- specifically opera- is often assumed to be one path and one path only. However, Molly Noori had a non-traditional journey from the beginning. Molly was involved in theater and choir from a young age but didn't start singing as a soloist until late in high school. She went to IU Bloomington to major in theater but quickly transferred back home to Indiana University Fort Wayne (now PFW) to be close to her father who was recovering from an organ transplant. She stayed in the theater department for a while, taking private voice lessons with Amy Prickett and some beginner theory classes through the music department. By the end of the first year it was clear to Molly that music department is where she wanted to spend all her time...and she would until 2012 when she would venture off to The University of Toledo as a Graduate Assistant to her teacher (former PFW instructor) Denise Bernardini.

Battles with Mental Health and Pregnancy

While attending school, she was also dealing with debilitating anxiety, depression, OCD, and dealing with the stress of having a very sick parent at home. Half way through sophomore year Molly got the absolute best - however, extremely unplanned- surprise of her life. She found out she was pregnant with her fabulous daughter, Anne (now 15)! Fast forward 9 months and Molly's best opera rehearsal tag-a-long buddy had made it into the world. Three weeks later Molly's dad died from a long battle with cancer. So... yea. Sophomore year turned out to be harder than Freshman year.



Grad School Adventures

Fast forward to grad school- Molly and Anne moved to Toledo and jumped into an intensive two-year program that would yield a Masters of Music (voice), a mainstage role debut with Toledo Opera, master classes with the legendary Carol Vaness and Marilyn Horne. Right towards the end of grad school Molly started having some weird symptoms that ended up putting her in the hospital the same day she defended her thesis.

After graduating in 2014 Molly had the absolute pleasure of working with Detroit Opera (formerly Michigan Opera Theatre) as a Resident Touring Artist, stage director, music director, stage manager, vocal coach, and (virtual) voice teacher from 2015-2021. During this period she went back to the University of Toledo to earn a Master of Music Education and continued to sing with Toledo Opera, teach music in the public school system, developed a performing arts camp in Michigan, and teach privately.



Continued Health Issues & Private Studio

The vague health issues still looming- Molly had put a solo singing career on hold. After getting married to her husband Sasha (a fabulous Tenor) Molly moved to Orange County, California in 2018. For a year Molly taught as a vocal specialist through Irvine Unified School District before deciding to stick with her true passion: opera. It became clear that if she wasn't performing she wasn't fulfilled. So in 2019 Molly decided to open a private studio and begin working toward professional singing again. Molly grew her studio very quickly- things were going well then... 2020 happened. Molly lost 80% of her studio, got long Covid almost right away and couldn't sing for about 9 months. Bookend that experience with two difficult miscarriages and the preexisting health issues and suffice it to say it was a rough couple years- especially vocally. However, Molly isn't referred to as the "Tenacious D-iva" for nothing. She quickly rebuilt her studio which is full the sweetest and most diverse group of singers she's ever met. Her studio is still going strong and she is fortunate to have had a waitlist for the past year.



Second Pregnancy

While she was building the studio she started building up her voice again. Pretty soon after she became pregnant with her beautiful son Julian (now 2). Julian was and is totally healthy but the pregnancy was a difficult one which resulted in a premature delivery, a cut pelvic floor (not good for singing) and exacerbation of the other health issues and the triggering of new ones. After Julian was born Molly was anemic for a year and dealing with worsening chronic pain, vision issues, and other neurological problems. Still, she was able to do comprimario roles and direct with Lyric Opera of Orange County, sing a few concerts in Orange County, place in an international singing competition, and maintain a full studio. "Big" singing, however, was not in the cards yet.

Molly Now

About a year ago, Molly's esophagus stopped functioning as normal and doctors finally started providing answers to all the bewildering health issues. A bunch of testing was being done to sort out the other symptoms that pointed to neurological and autoimmune issues that would eventually be diagnosed as Fibromyalgia. Post-surgery, Molly would have to wait a few months before her body was healed enough to support singing. This February, she made it her goal to build her voice up as quickly as possible so that she could participate in fall's audition season. With the help of her incredible wizard-of-a-technician voice teacher, Curtis Peters she was strong enough to participate in international opera star Jennifer Rowley's Aria Boot Camp just a few weeks ago in Sarasota Florida. This intensive audition-based program gathers internationally acclaimed coaches, conductors, directors, and teachers from around the country to help emerging artists prepare for the upcoming audition season. Having been able to participate in this program and feel strong and confident despite not being fully recovered was a dream come true for Molly and a testament to her fabulous support team.

Molly is getting ready to reprise her role as Assistant Director for Lyric Opera of Orange County's encore production of *Two Remain* where they will welcome composer Jake Heggie in October. As a singer, Molly is fiercely looking forward to everything this audition season will bring- knowing that she is only going to get stronger and that after the last 15 years of hurdles -there is nothing that can stand in her way. She is immensely grateful for her unique journey that has made her the artist and teacher that she is today.

**“LIFE IS A JOURNEY,
NOT A DESTINATION”**

Emerson