

HALL OF ACHIEVEMENT

2011/2012
Journal

Dr. Raina Murnak

Class of 1997

Raina moved to Copiague just in time for kindergarten. From an early age, she displayed creativity and humor, two traits she attributes to her successes. She was very lucky to have parents and teachers who encouraged her intellectual and artistic curiosities and who believed in her talents. Notable in her early education were Mr. Sinatra, Mr. Foster, Mrs. Crosley, Mrs. Nicharrico and Mrs. Felicetti. At an early age Raina discovered her love for singing. Raina credits Mr. Wurtzel with providing her very first opportunity to solo and taste the power of the stage.

It was with Mr. Wurtzel, Ms. Martens, Mrs. Currie, Miss Occhiogrosso and dance instructor Anne Cunningham that she honed her skills for musical theater, creative writing, vocal performance and dance. Raina starred in the High School musicals and graduated fifth in her class with academic and artistic honors and awards. She developed a career in classical performance while earning a Master's degree in Music Composition at SUNY Stony Brook. Raina graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Miami with a Doctorate in Musical Composition and Vocal Pedagogy where she remained on faculty, teaching in the Theory and Voice departments. She directed musicals and chorus at the University of Miami's Young Musicians Camp and taught a songwriting ensemble in the world renowned Bruce Hornsby Creative American Musician program.

Raina has had her classical works recorded, was backup singer for Latin pop star Ana Cristina and singer/songwriter Bob Pressner and lead singer with Van Gogh Listens. Her own band, The Pure Pinks, released their first album entitled *Famous*.

Raina continues to use all of her talents as teaching tools and is now working on her first textbook, a Music Theory Coloring Book for college students. She continues to paint, is writing a score for a musical entitled *Ruthenia*, written by her father, and is currently taking dance classes with the Miami Heat dance team.

“Be all of you. Live and leave behind a rainbow of your passions.”