

# TAKE FIVE

A Revealing Q and A  
with...

Allyson McHardy



Allyson McHardy appears as Smeton in the [Canadian Opera Company's](#) production of [Anna Bolena](#) (April 28 - May 26) and as a soloist in [The Nightingale and Other Short Fables](#) (April 13 – May 19).

Mezzo-soprano **Allyson McHardy** hails from Oshawa, Ontario and is a graduate of the Canadian Opera Company's Ensemble Studio. Her repertoire is finely balanced between opera and concert performance, and she has appeared with the Paris Opera, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Chicago Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Glyndebourne Festival, and the San Francisco Opera, among others.

### **1. When did you first think of yourself as an artist?**

I was in the Dramatic Integration program at the Banff Centre for the Arts. When I arrived to check in I had to have my picture taken for an ID card. When they handed me the card it said “artist” under my name. I remember that moment so clearly. I thought, wow this is it. I want that word after my name from now on.

### **2. Who helped you develop your voice as an artist?**

The program at the Banff Centre really did a lot to get me thinking about what wanted to say with my singing. Mary Morrison was also a huge support in encouraging me to trust that artistic voice.

### **3. What’s something that’s inspired you this week?**

The seniors at the gym where I work out. Talk about tireless commitment!

### **4. What’s your favourite restaurant in the city to visit?**

I love going to Marcello’s in my neighbourhood.

### **5. What do you want to see more of on Toronto stages?**

Much like the songs in the first half of the Stravinsky evening at the COC, I’d love to see chamber music done like that more often. It takes the material and gives it a context which I think really brings the audience in. It’s strength is in its simplicity. Sometimes a song (without too much staging) is enough.