



Cindy Ellis is a Cuban-American music educator and vocalist. As a jazz vocal soloist and alto with the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, Ellis frequently performs and teaches masterclasses to K-12 students throughout North America. Most recently, the JMAX Singers collaborated with Jacob Collier and Coldplay for NBC's Saturday Night Live and were the headlining ensemble at the 2023 American Choral Directors Association National Conference in Cincinnati, OH.

A native of Holguín, Cuba, Ellis immigrated to the United States in 2005. She earned her Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education/Jazz Voice from Florida International University and her Master's Degree in Music Education from the University of Missouri. Ellis is one of two full-time choral directors at Miami Arts Studio (MAS), a 6-12th grade public performing arts magnet school in Miami, FL. Together with her husband Ryan Ellis, they have built a top-notch choral program of first and second generation Hispanic immigrants.

The MAS Vocal magnet aims to bring music that represents the cultures of Miami to their state, country and world. Wherever the MAS Vocal ensembles perform, Mrs. Ellis uses the repertoire, rhythms and languages of Latin America and the Caribbean to facilitate the students in self-expression. Her ensembles have only earned Straight Superiors at their annual district and state evaluations and have been featured at The Adrienne Arsht Center, New World Symphony Hall, Carnegie Hall in New York City and most recently at the Florida Music Educators Association Conference in Tampa, FL. Mrs. Ellis' SSAA ensemble, BellArmonia, was one of only three in the state of Florida to earn a Superior with Distinction at the 2023 FVA State Evaluation and the MAS Vocal program had the highest amount of vocal students in the state be accepted into FVA All-State ensembles. Her goal as a conductor and teacher is not simply to build professional musicians, but more importantly, kind, confident, passionate citizens who know what it is to be a part of something great, and who will reach for their full potential in any career they choose.

Notable MAS Vocal performances include recording background vocals for Gloria and Emilio Estefan, and several Latin Music award shows including the Latin American Music Awards and the Latin Grammy's. In 2022, MAS Vocal students performed in Los Angeles for the Summit of the Americas, a meeting hosted by President Joe Biden in Los Angeles that brought together 40 Presidents from the Americas and Caribbean nations. In 2020, Mrs. Ellis was published by GIA Publications as a contributing author on "Teaching with Heart." This year, she served as instructional design editor and contributing author of "Teaching Beyond the Music." Also, MAS Vocal has been invited to perform at both Florida ACDA Conference in Orlando this Fall AND the South Region ACDA Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, in February.