



# Dena DeRose

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It's no small accomplishment to be thought of as "The most creative and compelling singer-pianist since Shirley Horn", but that's exactly how Joel Siegel of the Washington City Paper described Dena DeRose. If she comes to your city and you want to catch the show, go early, because the room is going to be packed. She not only awes her audiences and music critics with her facility on the piano and her vocal talent but, as Richard Scheinin of the San Jose Mercury aptly put it, "... she exudes joy ... what soul!"

Dena has accumulated an impressive list of performance credits. From the legendary clubs around the world like the Blue Note, Smoke and the Jazz Standard in New York, the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., the Pitt Inn and Body and Soul in Tokyo, The Jazz Showcase in Chicago, Marian's in Bern, The Jazz Center in Istanbul, and Alexander Platz in Rome, to major Jazz Festivals that include The Red Sea Jazz Festival in Israel, The Monterey Jazz Festival, The San Francisco Jazz Festival, Ancona (Italy), Estoril (Portugal), The North Sea and The Hague Jazz Festivals in Holland, The Floating Jazz Festival- Jazz Cruise (2005, 2007, 2008), The Kansas City Jazz and Blues Festival, Jazz Baltica Festival in Germany, VinterJazz Festival in Denmark. Dena always delivers "...vivid and often exciting demonstrations of how innovative her musical concepts are..." (Philip Elwood, San Francisco Examiner). Dena has brought that vitality and innovation to performances alongside the likes of Ray Brown, Clark Terry, Marian McPartland, Benny Golson, John Scofield, Deborah Brown, Jimmy Cobb, Ken Peplowski, Phil Woods, David 'Fathead' Newman, Rufus Reid, Mark Murphy, Slide Hampton, Marvin Stamm and many, many others.

As a recording artist, Dena has 9 CDs as a leader to her credit, all of which have received superior accolades. Cadence Magazine gave her both their Album of

the Year and Best Vocal Jazz Album awards for "Another World" and "I Can See Clearly Now". Christopher Loudon of Jazz Times says that the MaxJazz label "...takes another big leap forward" with the release of "A Walk In The Park". It also received three Grammy considerations. Two recordings released in 2007 "The Nearness of Two" (GoFour), a live duo concert recorded in Ancona, Italy with trumpeter Marvin Stamm, and a group effort recording called "A Night in Claremont" (Vega) with drummer Akira Tana, bassist Ray Drummond, tenor man Dave Ellis, highlights DeRose as a pianist, composer, arranger, and vocalist. Dena's Latest CD's for the MaxJazz label "Dena DeRose - Live at Jazz Standard Volume 1 & 2" (2007 and 2008) have garnered Grammy Nominations. Live at Jazz Standard Vol. 2 has been chosen as one of the "Top 10 CD's of 2008" by All About Jazz, Downbeat Magazine, and the JJA, among others. It was in the Top 50 on the Jazzweek radio charts for over 12 weeks with many wonderful reviews such as Donald Elfmans' who writes "DeRose has absorbed the best of the great ones while being her own well-defined self at all times", and Chris Andrew Hovans' "Top 10 picks for 2008" says "Of all the female Jazz vocalists out there, DeRose is the most versatile. This comes from the fact that she is an accomplished pianist and musician, not just a singer."

Astoundingly, Dena has also found time to hone her skills as a Jazz educator, and has been on the faculty at some prestigious education venues, including Manhattan School of Music, NYU, The New School, Long Island University, Purchase College in New York, and The Hartt School of Music in Connecticut. Ms. DeRose is currently the Head of Jazz Vocal Department at The University of Music and Dramatic Arts in Graz, Austria and has been teaching at the Prince Claus Conservatory of Music in The Netherlands for the past 7 years. She frequently teaches at clinics and workshops, such as the Dave Brubeck Institute in Oakland, CA, The Jazz School in Berkeley, CA, Taller de Musics in Barcelona, Spain, NJPAC Jazz for Teen Program, the Stanford Jazz Workshop, The Litchfield Summer Jazz Camp, and the Rotterdam Summer Jazz School, amongst others. She has served as a judge at both the Thelonious Monk Vocal Competition and served for 6 years on the NJ Star Ledger Scholarship Awards.

In 2000, Terry Teachout of the New York Times wrote, "Dena DeRose sings Jazz as if she had been at it her whole life long, and then some". He was closer to the truth than he might have imagined. Her mother heard her picking out melodies on a toy organ when she was three. She studied classical piano throughout her childhood, until she was enticed into the world of Jazz by playing Count Basie's music in her junior high stage band. At 17, she found Doug Beardsley, the only Jazz teacher in hometown Binghamton, and started lessons. By the time she went to college, the passion for Jazz she now exudes was fully evident. She was performing anywhere she could, taking on private students, and practicing so many hours a day that sometimes she would sleep in her studio. To feed her

insatiable Jazz appetite, she would slip away from campus and drive four hours to New York City to hear piano idols Hank Jones, Mulgrew Miller and Kenny Barron. It is a rare music career that isn't peppered with challenges and obstacles, and Dena's is no exception-her Jazz fervor led her right into a case of carpal tunnel syndrome, aggravated by arthritis, which was severe enough to require surgery, and forced her to completely give up the piano. With her spirit and her livelihood both in jeopardy, in a club one night, someone dared her to get up and sing a song. She did it, she liked it, and so did the audience. Dena had not only found her ticket out of the physical predicament, but, two years later when she had recovered enough to add piano back into the act, she also discovered that the singing had helped her add lyricism and melody to her piano lines.

In 1991, she brought the whole package to New York. Some ten years later, having never let up in the meantime, Dena's talent began to be widely acclaimed. In addition to the Cadence magazine awards for her recordings, she was selected by Downbeat's Critic's Poll as 2002, 2003 and 2006's "Artist Deserving Wider Recognition", and All About Jazz anointed her as a "Jazz Artist of the Year" in 2003 and 2006, and "Best Jazz Album of 2007". She has been featured on 'Morning Edition' on National Public Radio, and three times on NPR's "Marian McPartlands' Piano Jazz" including the recent "30th Anniversary" show taped live at Dizzy's Coca-Cola Jazz club in NYC.

As her renown spread to the international scene, feature articles and reviews on Dena were published in the New York Times, Downbeat, Jazz Times, LA Times, Seattle Times, Jazz Is, France's Jazz Hot, Italy's Ancona, and several others. Now, Dena is making Don Heckman's (LA Times) prediction come true - that she "...has all the vocal skills needed to rise to the top level of her field". She is in demand, her passion is stronger and more visible than ever, and she consistently delights her ever-growing worldwide audiences. Alan Bargebuhr of Cadence magazine succinctly summed up the reason why... simply, she is a "...stunningly talented pianist/vocalist."

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