

Nancy Walker _____ Biography

Pianist and composer Nancy Walker has been recognized with honours Canada-wide, including the Montréal Jazz Festival's Grand Prix de Jazz, the National Jazz Awards Keyboardist Of The Year Award, a JUNO nomination for Instrumental Album Of The Year, and an induction into the Mississauga Music Walk Of Fame. A dynamic improviser, an artful composer and a responsive accompanist, Nancy has been praised both for her work as a solo artist and as a musical collaborator. With several discs to her own credit as leader, she can also be heard on a wide range of recordings as a side player, by artists from Kirk MacDonald to Emilie-Claire Barlow. Most recently she can be heard on the 2024 recording *Here's To Life* by John Neudorf (on which she is both pianist and co-producer), and Sarah Jerrom's 2025 JUNO nominated *Magpie*.

Nancy's work is not limited to the jazz idiom. As a composer of contemporary choral music, she was honoured to be commissioned to compose the music for a full-length musical theatre production (SATB chorus and soloists) in collaboration with The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, entitled FIRST. The musical premiered at the New Credit Community Centre in June, 2018, and in 2020-21 the production received The Ontario Historical Society's Indigenous History Award. Later, the Mississauga Children's Choir commissioned Nancy to adapt one of the songs from FIRST (*Water*, with lyrics by Steven Campbell) for their senior children's choir. It was performed in May, 2024 at the final concert of the choir's 2023/24 season.

She has also toured internationally and recorded with many artists outside the jazz idiom, including Raffi, Sylvia Tyson, Roger Whittaker and The Parachute Club.

Nancy's compositions reflect her view of the age we live in - at times intense, at times poignant, at times cerebral. Her inspirations include architecture, cinema, literature, visual art and nature.

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“Walker’s music vocabulary is strong and varied enough to provide an emotional experience that never wallows. It’s music that celebrates itself while including the audience in that celebration. In other words it’s accessible without any commercial compromises.” John Corcelli, criticsatlarge.ca

“Nancy Walker has played enough piano to know how to keep listeners interested however hard she pushes the boundaries of familiarity.” Geoff Chapman, Toronto Star

“Harmonically she's influenced by the usual suspects—Evans, Hancock, Jarrett, etc. —but her delicate touch and denser harmonic constructs brings to mind British pianist John Taylor as well...Walker's music is easy on the ears, but don't mistake that for lacking in interest or challenge, because she masks an advanced harmonic concept within an accessible veneer.” John Kelman, All About Jazz

“A fine example of the modern jazz musician’s art.” Mark Miller, The Globe and Mail

“A gifted pianist and composer, Nancy Walker is possessed of a lyricism that can suggest lapping water and bright skies, and a contrasting rhythmic drive. A former student of Fred Hersch, she builds on a tradition of romantic jazz piano that has deep roots in the harmonic innovations of Bill Evans.” Stuart Broomer, Toronto Life Magazine

“Toronto pianist Nancy Walker continues to write some of the most interesting and sophisticated contemporary jazz in the country. Contemporary, yet firmly connected to the history of jazz and therefore accessible.” Lyle Rebbeck, Medicine Hat Jazz Festival

Visit Nancy’s website at www.nancywalkermusic.com