

Nancy Kelly

Singer, composer, educator **Nancy Kelly** has always been drawn to the arts. From age four, in her hometown of Rochester, New York, Nancy first studied piano, which later led to clarinet, dramatic arts, dance and later voice - which was to be her calling - at the **Eastman School of Music**. Over the course of an illustrious, five-decade career, Kelly has honed her trademark swing/bop, take-no-prisoners, soulful, swinging style in front of audiences across the U.S. and abroad, including concerts in Singapore, Switzerland, France, Turkey, Japan, Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Jakarta.

Kelly got her real education as house singer at Jewels, a jazz club in center city Philadelphia, where she shared the bill with, among others, Betty Carter, Houston Person, Etta Jones, Joey DeFrancesco, Groove Holmes and Jack McDuff. Nancy is a charter member of the Upstate Burn Society, a loosely organized group including Don Menza, Joe Romano, and several other Jazz Illuminati from Upstate New York. In fact, Kelly will be inducted into the **Rochester Music Hall of Fame** on May 1, 2022 (Class of 2020). Past Alumni include trumpeters Chuck Mangione and Lew Soloff; opera star Renee Fleming, bass legend Ron Carter, drummer Steve Gadd and vibraphonist Joe Locke.

The acclaimed singer also enjoys a solid fan base from around the globe for her classic swinging style. Ms. Kelly's artistry takes us back to when jazz – including vocal jazz - was an authentic expression of genuine emotion.

Kelly appears regularly in New York City, at such hallowed venues as The Blue Note, Birdland, The Rainbow Room, and Dizzy's at JALC. She also works frequently in Los Angeles and Miami, and at countless jazz clubs, festivals, and as part of symphony orchestra engagements across the country.

She was twice named "**Best Female Jazz Vocalist**" in the **DownBeat** Readers' Poll. She has recorded six critically-acclaimed recordings. Her first recording, **Live Jazz**, reached #11 on the Billboard jazz charts. **Born to Swing** and her fourth recording, **Well Alright**, feature guest tenor saxophonist Houston Person. Nancy's highly acclaimed **B That Way** enjoyed eight solid weeks in the top 50 on the national Jazz Week charts and received rave reviews worldwide. Her most recent full album, **Remembering Mark Murphy**, was hailed as one of the top 20 Jazz recordings of 2019.

Ms. Kelly's many accomplishments and accolades are proof that a great voice doesn't happen overnight. More than any other instrument, the voice gains its resonance and soulfulness from the body's life experiences that surround it. To paraphrase Bird, "*If you haven't lived it, isn't going to come out of your horn.*" And Nancy Kelly *has* lived it.

She is, in every respect, "The Real Deal."