

Melinda DeRocker Bio

Melinda DeRocker has a rich musical heritage, having grown up in the deep South just 90 miles from New Orleans and 200 miles from the Mississippi Delta blues. Her parents exposed her to Big Band music, Broadway show tunes and classical music, and in the Southern culture and church she discovered gospel, country, and bluegrass.

She began singing early, in church choirs and in musicals at the local university summer programs. While her peers were tuned into the latest pop hits Melinda sought a diverse musical experience, drawn to singers such as Barbara Streisand, Glen Campbell, Ella Fitzgerald, the group Peter, Paul and Mary, Frank Sinatra, and going to Broadway musicals in New York City and The Preservation Hall jazz venue in New Orleans.

Fast forward past two degrees in music - choral conducting and voice, and lots of church solos, Melinda was cast in a national tour of "The King and I," which led her to New York City. Regional theatre, from New Hampshire to Colorado followed. She then served as the Music Director of a church on the Upper East Side of Manhattan where she directed a 40-voice choir over five years.

Moving back into the musical theatre world, and after another national tour of a children's musical, "Anastasia Krupnik," Melinda began singing standards from the Great American Songbook. She was inspired by her parents' love story of falling in love and marrying at the height of World War II, being apart for two years in that war and then reuniting for 69 years together. The standards were the backdrop of their love affair and Melinda began to make these songs her own.

In 2013, she released her first album of jazz standards entitled "I'll Be Seeing You" featuring New York city-based jazz musicians. The album release led to a variety of gigs, from the UN Christmas dinner at the Roosevelt Hotel in NYC, a cabaret performance at Festival South, and corporate events at Battery Park City and the Astor Center in Manhattan, to name a few.

Her second album, "Christmas Time Is Here," was released in 2018, featuring familiar Christmas songs but with unique, fresh arrangements. ***The Dallas Morning News listed it as one of six "Great New Christmas Albums" of 2018.***

Recently, sold-out performances at Pangea in New York City and a show at Feinstein's in Carmel, Indiana, all featuring her jazz trio, have been enthusiastically received.

Melinda and her husband, Rob, live in the Hudson Valley, just north of New York City, in an 1840's former Ice House. They've insulated it!