

# MELINDA DEROCKER

## BIO

Melinda DeRocker grew up in the deep South, just 90 miles from New Orleans jazz and 200 miles from 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.

Melinda began singing in church choirs at an early age, sang in a folk trio at age 14 and in the chorus of summer musicals at the local university. While her peers were tuned into the latest pop and rock bands, Melinda was listening to Barbara Streisand, Glen Campbell, Peter, Paul and Mary, Broadway musicals and going to New Orleans to hear jazz. She also began to delve into the standards genre, learning many of the songs from her mother who played piano.

Fast forward past two degrees in music - conducting and voice - and lots of church solos, Melinda performed in a national tour of *The King and I*, which led her to New York. More regional musical theatre, from Colorado to New Hampshire, followed. Melinda then served a stint as the Music Director of a church on the Upper East Side of Manhattan where she directed a 50-voice choir in 15 concerts.

Most recently, she released her first album, a CD of standards from the Great American Songbook, entitled "I'll Be Seeing You," utilizing New York-based jazz musicians. That album has led to a variety of gigs from singing at the UN Christmas Dinner at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City, to a cabaret performance at Festival South, to corporate events at Battery Park and The Astor Center in lower Manhattan.

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

Melinda lives in the Hudson Valley in an 1843 Ice House with her husband, Rob and black labrador retriever, Evelyn.