

BIO

Ellen Robinson

“Ellen Robinson knows how to connect with an audience...she just lets it fly, and what happens is a lovely melodic parade.”

Jim Santella / All About Jazz

Jazz vocalist Ellen Robinson is a breath of fresh air. Swinging, sparkling vocals are her trademark, with a repertoire full of surprises, ranging from up-tempo rhythms to the hushed intensity of ballads.

Celebrated for impeccable timing, clever phrasing and her expertise in telling a story with warmth and vulnerability, she does it all effortlessly, without artifice. The songs she writes and performs are full of quirky rhythms and catchy melodies – like the lady herself – upbeat and full of personality.

Ellen and her quartet of top Bay Area musicians bring a joyous interplay to their performances and meld their individual sounds into a single beautiful voice. Their mutual respect and admiration are abundantly evident. Multi talented pianist **Murray Low** (www.linkedin.com/in/murraylow) has been nominated for two Grammys and also for 2008 Pianist of the Year by the *Latin Jazz Corner*. **Sam Bevan** (www.sambevan.com) a versatile bassist with tone, swing and chops, is solidly in-the-groove in any style from jazz to funk to Afro-Cuban and has worked with such notables as Roswell Rudd, David Grisman and Mary Wilson. **Kristen Strom** (www.kristenstrom.com) one of the finest contemporary sax players has recorded with many renowned jazz and pop singers such as Kevin Mahogany and Natalie Cole, in addition to leading her own quintet. Drummer **Dan Foltz** (www.danielfoltz.com) has toured with Grammy winner Shelby Lynne and performs with Pan-Latin bands Ritmojito and Sombra y Luz.

Vocalist, composer, musician, choral director, and educator, Ellen grew up on the east coast, where she began piano lessons at the age of nine and taught herself guitar 11. She sang in her high school chorus, studied piano in college, and later performed as a singer/songwriter in folk clubs in New York City. Eventually moving to California, she embraced the world of jazz and has been performing as a jazz vocalist ever since.

Ellen has appeared in the San Francisco Bay area at Yoshi's, Paramount Theater, Freight & Salvage, the Jazzschool, Chapel of the Chimes, Storyville, and the Jazz and Blues by the Bay Festival, among many other venues. She has also enjoyed collaborations with many talented jazz musicians, including pianists **Ken French** and **Ben Flint**; bass players **John Wiitala** and **John Schifflett**; reed players **Charles McNeal** and **Harvey Wainapel**; drummers **Jeff Mars** and **Jon Arkin**.

Her second CD “Mercy! Ellen Robinson Live” released in 2006, captures those transparent moments and passionate one-of-a-kind performances in a compilation of songs selected from four different concerts performed since her first CD “On My Way To You” released in 2001. She produced both of these recordings on her own EMR MUSIC label with Grammy nominated CD producer **Bud Spangler** (www.budspangler.com), also known in the San Francisco Bay Area as a masterful drummer, seasoned concert producer, and former KCSM & KJAZ radio host.

QUOTES

Ellen Robinson

"Ellen Robinson is blessed with great pipes."
Jazz Improv Magazine

"The urgency with which she delivers each tune is palpable. Her enthusiasm and love of the music is infectious. Her willingness to bare her soul through each song is courageous. We become privy to her journey...a ride through the joy, the pain, the celebration of life. It's all here."
Melanie Berzon, KCSM

"Hers is a white chocolate sound, intense and pure, swinging and bitter-sweet. Keep your ears and eyes open for more Ellen Robinson."
Carol Sloane – jazz vocalist

"The musicianship of her group, her repertoire, the arrangements, and her delivery places her in a pantheon of the very best performers we've had here."
Norman Landsberg, Piedmont Piano Company, Oakland, CA

"To compare Ellen Robinson's vocal timbre to that of Irene Kral may be the ultimate compliment to Ms. Robinson. But there's a hint of Irene present here on some excellent material. Robinson is the kind of singer who could silence a jazz club in a hurry."
George Fendel, KMHD FM, Oregon

"Ellen Robinson knows how to connect with an audience...she just lets it fly, and what happens is a lovely melodic parade. This singer delivers from the heart. That's her forte...Robinson interprets lyrics in such a way that we feel them completely."
Jim Santella, All About Jazz

"Robinson makes music that people want to call their own."
Pacifica Tribune, Pacifica, CA

"Phenomenal vocals and well crafted songs."
Joe Kelley, WVOF, Fairfield, CT

"She's got the right ideas and the voice to make them happen."
Jerry Atkins, KTXK, Texarkana, TX

"Ellen Robinson swings like crazy!"
Billy Philadelphia - pianist

"Ellen Robinson is a welcome entre into the world of jazz voices."
Bruce Tater, KETR, Commerce, TX

TEACHING

Ellen Robinson

and dedicated vocal coach. She is notable for arranging and guiding vocalists toward mastery of nearly any genre of song.

Ellen has been teaching singers and directing vocal groups for over 35 years and is a member of **NATS** (National Association of Teachers of Singing). Ellen is currently the Director of the **Anything Goes Choruses** in San Francisco (Community Music Center), and Oakland (First Congregational Church). These are community choruses for men and women she founded in 1980. In addition, she teaches jazz singing and chart writing at the **Jazzschool** in Berkeley and conducts musical theater workshops for seniors at **Stagebridge** in Oakland. She also directs two women's performing ensembles called **Girlfriendz** and **Treble Makers**, and teaches a beginning singing class for women called **Swingshift Singers**. She has been a vocal instructor on the faculty of **U.C. Berkeley Extension** and a choral conductor with the **Oakland Youth Chorus**.

Ellen's teaching is enriched by a firm foundation of education and training: she earned a Bachelor of Music degree focusing on piano and voice from Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York, and studied Music Education on the graduate level at several universities in New York: C.W. Post, Hofstra University, Bank Street College of Education, and SUNY-Stony Brook. She has studied with the legendary **Mark Murphy**, jazz vocalist **Madeline Eastman**, scat singer extraordinaire **Kitty Margolis**, and cabaret performer **Faith Winthrop**.

One of the San Francisco Bay Areas busiest music directors, jazz singer Ellen Robinson has helped take many a vocalist from the level of simply wanting to sing to the stage. She has worked with literally thousands of

students throughout her life and continues to be a gifted

On My Way To You

DISCOGRAPHY

Ellen
Robinson

- 1. From This Moment On** 3:52
Cole Porter
- 2. There Are Such Things** 3:44
Stanley Adams, Abel Baer, George Meyer
- 3. Feels Like Home** 5:29
Randy Newman
- 4. Throw It Away** 3:48
Abbey Lincoln
- 5. Give Me The Simple Life** 3:57
Harry Ruby, Rube Bloom
- 6. How Deep Is The Ocean** 5:43
Irving Berlin
- 7. I Will** 3:22
John Lennon, Paul McCartney
- 8. On And On** 6:05
Stephen Bishop
- 9. That Song You Left Unsung** 4:42
Ellen Robinson
- 10. Let's Do It** 3:33
Cole Porter
- 11. On My Way To You** 5:43
Michel Legrand, Alan & Marilyn Bergman

Ben Flint – piano
John Schifflett – bass
Andrew Eberhard – drums
Harvey Wainapel – soprano/tenor sax, clarinet

*Produced by Ellen Robinson
with Bud Spangler*

Recorded at
Bay Records
Berkeley CA
www.bayrec.com

Engineering
Mike Cogan

Mastering
Ken Lee, Ken Lee Mastering
Oakland, CA

Mercy!

Ellen Robinson Live

DISCOGRAPHY

Ellen
Robinson

1. FLY AWAY 4:15

(B) Ellen Robinson

2. EVERYBODY'S CRYIN' MERCY 4:36

(A) Mose Allison

3. LET'S FALL IN LOVE 4:38

(B) Harold Arlen, Ted Koehle - Arranged by Ellen Robinson

4. THE DIMMING OF THE DAY 6:32

(C) Richard Thompson - Vocal duet with Ben Flint

5. MY BABY JUST CARES FOR ME 4:45

(A) Walter Donaldson, Gus Kahn

6. STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS 4:09

(D) Paul Simon

7. HOW I WISH (ASK ME NOW) 6:11

(D) Thelonious Monk, Jon Hendricks

8. THEM THERE EYES 3:12

(B) Maceo Pinkard,
William Tracey, Doris Tauber

9. WHERE DO YOU START? 3:17

(C) Mandel, Bergman

10. ONE OF YOU AND ME 3:22

(B) Ellen Robinson

11. HEAVEN DOWN HERE 4:59

(D) Phil Roy, John Shanks,
Rick Neigher, Jim Carrey

12. HOLD ON 2:39

(C) Ellen Robinson

13. IT GOES LIKE IT GOES 3:29

(D) David Shire, Norman Gimbel

14. THE FIDDLE AND THE DRUM 3:18

(A) Joni Mitchell - Arranged by Ellen Robinson

Ben Flint - piano (1 - 14)

John Schifflett - bass (2, 5)

John Wiitala - bass (1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13)

John Arkin - drums (6, 7, 11, 13)

Andrew Eberhard - drums (2, 5, 14)

Jeff Marrs - drums (1, 3, 8, 10)

Charles McNeal - soprano & tenor sax (1, 2, 3, 5, 8,
9, 10, 12)

(A) Freight and Salvage

Berkeley, CA - 11.26.01

Ben Flint - piano, John Schifflett - bass,
Andrew Eberhard - drums,
Charles McNeal - tenor sax
Lou Judson - recording engineer

(B) Freight and Salvage

Berkeley, CA - 10.17.03

Ben Flint - piano, John Wiitala - bass
Jeff Marrs - drums,
Charles McNeal - soprano & tenor sax
Lou Judson - recording engineer

(C) Community Music Center

San Francisco, CA - 2.28.04

Ben Flint - piano, John Schifflett - bass,
Charles McNeal - tenor sax
Steve Watkins - recording engineer

(D) Community Music Center

San Francisco, CA - 2.26.05

Ben Flint - piano, John Wiitala - bass,
John Arkin - drums
Bud Spangler - recording engineer
Steve Watkins - Nikki Ben Natan - assistant engineers

**Produced by Ellen Robinson
with Bud Spangler**

Mixing and Post Production

Dan Feiszli, www.studiorhythm.com
Albany, CA

Mastering

Ken Lee, Ken Lee Mastering
Oakland, CA