

Faith Winthrop Biography

Faith Winthrop's career is as storied as her extensive songbook. From an aspiring 11-year-old treading the boards of the G line streetcar and spontaneously taking requests from passengers traveling from Brookline to Boston to the still singing and swinging senior, her life remains a continual love affair with song.

Her path to a vocal career began with classical voice lessons from the turban-topped opera diva, Madame Cleora Wood. But upon hearing the incomparable voice and inimitable styling of Sarah Vaughan, Faith's musical direction was forever changed. After adding Peggy Lee, Mabel Mercer, and Mel Torme to her list of vocal influences, she received valuable advice that further steered her course: While warming up the mic for Billie Holiday at the fabled Storyville jazz club in Boston, the jazz legend encouraged the aspiring performer to continue with a singing career; Nat Hentoff of *Downbeat* wrote, "Faith Winthrop's warmth and intensity, coupled with her surety of intonation and inventiveness, makes her one of the swingiest singers to be heard today;" and upon reviewing Faith in her first important performance as the opening act for a very young Tony Bennett, *Boston Music* critic George Frazier wrote, "She has a great sound and style, and pays attention to the lyrics she sings....she belongs in one of those little avant-garde clubs in San Francisco."

A few months and many miles later, she became exactly that, an integral part of the City by the Bay's cultural fabric as the house singer at the legendary hungry i where she performed alongside other young luminaries, including Woody Allen, Barbara Streisand, and Mort Sahl. She also shared that stage with both the Basie band and Mel Torme.

Quickly established as one of the era's finest talents, Faith took her show on the road, performing in some of the nation's top jazz and cabaret clubs, including the London House and Mister Kelly's in Chicago, and the Blue Angel and Village Vanguard in New York. She made her TV debut on the "Today Show" before permanently settling in San Francisco to raise her daughter.

In San Francisco, this highly revered artist has continued to influence the music scene through performance and vocal coaching. She was the founding director of Glide Memorial's now-famed choir and a faculty member of the SF Community Music Center and the SF Conservatory of Music. In her San Francisco studio, she has coached a number of acclaimed artists, including Ben Vereen, Al Jarreau, Holly Near, Wesla Whitfield, Paula West, Madeline Eastman and Jacqui Naylor. Today, she currently teaches at Mills College, Berkeley's Jazzschool, and her private studio. She remains a leading specialist in vocal technique and performance skills and delights in inspiring not only accomplished singers, but also beginners and those whose passion for singing has been renewed.

Faith put her stamp on classic standards of the American Songbook in her 20-song CD, "Leap of Faith." She later produced an autobiographical one-woman show, "It's All About Faith," which was a loving and bracingly honest review of her life as a songstress. It resulted in her second CD, "Having Myself a Time!" and demonstrated her extraordinary songwriting talents.

Integrating her new original works with her trademark soulful and elegant style, rhythmic comedic timing, and astonishing vocal control, Faith continues to wow crowds both nationally and internationally, most recently at San Francisco's Razz Room, where she introduced her new show, "Faith Lift," to stunning reviews.

Faith is currently crafting more tunes of wit and wonder and plans to record her music and take her show on the road again, ever faithful to her love affair with song.