

Donna Wickham Vocalist, Composer, Educator

Donna Wickham is a continually surprising musician whose professional activities include work as a jazz composer, arranger, lyricist, vocalist, conductor, and pianist in genres that range from early music to rock, jazz and avant-garde. Her background as both a classical and jazz musician has resulted in her unique genre-bending approach to chamber jazz that has been described as 21st century art song.

Donna's performance credits include work with Josh Groban, Christopher O'Reilly, The Dallas Symphony, The New York Philharmonic, The Aspen Music Festival, The Vail Music Festival, the Colorado Music Festival, the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Colorado Music Festival, and Santa Fe New Music, in addition to numerous appearances as a jazz musician and band leader. In 2011, she produced two critically acclaimed CD's on her own record label, Gizmo records. Her classical quartet, Firesign, released an album featuring the world premiere recording of Terry Schlenker's *Mass for Four Voices*, along with William Byrd's *Mass for Four Voices*, which was named one of the top classical recordings of 2011. She followed that with an ambitious jazz album featuring her own compositions, entitled "Myth and Memory," which featured settings of poetry by Anna Akhmatova and Rainer Maria Rilke. In 2012, she produced Firesign's latest CD entitled "Follow We This Joyful Birth." In 2017, Donna's composition *Veni Redemptor Gentium* was chosen to be performed at the Music by Women Festival in Columbus, Mississippi. Donna has performed in many classical choral recordings with the Desert Chorale and St. Martin's Chamber Choir, and as a back-up vocalist and pianist in several studio projects.

Her formal education includes a BM in vocal performance and an MM in conducting from the University of Denver. She counts pianist, composer, and ECM recording artist Art Lande, pianist Eric Gunnison, and saxophonist and educator Lynn Baker as her jazz mentors. Donna is also increasingly known for her innovative approach to music education. Her students regularly win numerous awards, including the prestigious Downbeat student music award. She is the head of the Vocal Jazz program at the Lamont School of Music, and teaches and designs courses for Colorado Community Colleges Online.

Donna enjoys an active life that includes technical mountaineering, triathlons, and adventures in all sorts of wild places. She makes her home in Denver with Gizmo, the little black cat who serves as the FEO (feline executive officer) of Gizmo records.