

CLAIRDEE jazz vocalist • educator

[492 words Bio]

"Musical artistry and heartfelt emotion in every soulful note." –*Pop Magazine (Berlin)*

"A whole lot of interpretive brilliance" is how *JazzTimes* describes Clairdee's soulfully alluring style and rich timbre. She playfully swings, has an intimate, vulnerable and gentle way with a ballad, and can shout at will, revealing roots in the gospel church. Her masterly interpretation of lyrics is a gift aptly described by the inimitable Nancy Wilson who said, "In the tradition of all great vocalists, Clairdee infuses each song with her own unique style while always remaining true to the song itself."

Clairdee sings in night clubs, concert halls, and festivals in Edinburgh, Tokyo, Bangkok, Toronto, Moscow and St Petersburg Russia, New York, New Hampshire, San Francisco, Monterey, Los Angeles, and points in between. In addition to leading her world-class band, she performs with pops orchestras, big bands, and some of America's most notable jazz instrumentalists (Dick Hyman, Bucky Pizzarelli, Ken Peplowski, Houston Person, Billy Higgins, Russell Malone).

An arranger and producer, Clairdee's discography includes four highly praised albums on her Declare Music label. The latest album, "A Love Letter to Lena," received extensive national radio airplay, garnered accolades from international press, and acknowledged in three categories in the 2020 Grammy® first round nominations.

It was her finely honed jazz sensibility and immediate rapport with audiences that attracted esteemed artist manager John Levy. Levy, whose clients included many of the music industry's greatest (Shirley Horn, Joe Williams, George Shearing, and Nancy Wilson who was fan), recognized Clairdee's professionalism, skilled showmanship and sophistication. In 2007-2008, he showcased Clairdee and guitarist-vocalist Henry Johnson (Ramsey Lewis, Nancy Wilson, Sonny Stitt), in New York City in concert, titled "Vocal Legacy".

2018 recipient of the Bay Area Jazz and Blues Artist Lifetime Achievement Award, Clairdee has a long track record as a passionate advocate for music education and mentorship: Professor of Jazz Voice, San Francisco Conservatory of Music; Teaching Artist, SFJAZZ and San Francisco Symphony; Artist Advisory Member & Mentor, Jazz in the Neighborhood; former vocal jazz instructor, Jazz Department at University of California (Berkeley), and Diablo Valley College; 7th grade teacher, Denver Public Schools. Clairdee holds a BA, Fine Arts & Education from University of Colorado (Boulder), and a BS in Information Systems Management, University of San Francisco.

Clairdee was born in Tucson and raised in Denver. She grew up harmonizing with her siblings and was active in school and church choirs, and played viola in the orchestra. At age five, she says she knew that music was her calling when her family started performing together at convalescent homes and hospitals. "The smiles on the faces of the patients was a testament to the power and transformative nature of music." Thus began her love of community service. Her varied experiences in corporate, non-profit, and education compliment her range of musical and entrepreneurial skills.

"My purpose," Clairdee says, "is to engage, uplift and build community through music – creating narrative that inspires beyond the stage."

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