

Janice Isabel Jackson | Biography

Soprano, Contemporary Music Specialist, Vocal Instructor, Producer, Composer

Janice Isabel Jackson holds a Bachelor of Performance from the University of Victoria where she studied with well-known Canadian baritone Bernard Turgeon and 4 years running received the St. Jude vocal scholarship. She then received a full scholarship to study at the Utrecht Conservatory in the Netherlands (where she lived for 13 years) and received her Master's in Musical Arts and Chamber Music, specifically for her interpretation of contemporary music. She then went on to premiere many new works throughout Europe, Canada, the US and Asia by both emerging and established composers.



Since then, Janice has sung over 240 world premieres, many works written specifically for her, and performed with contemporary music ensembles and in concert halls around the world – Beijing, Paris, Vienna, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Torino, Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, New York, Berlin, Johannesburg, Cape Town and more. She has appeared in countless contemporary music festivals including the November Festival (Ghent), Wien Modern (Vienna), Ludwigs Lust (Hamburg), The Proms (Amsterdam), IRCAM (Paris), Big Torino 2000 (Turin), the Diem Festival of Electro-acoustic music (Denmark), Italian New Music Festival (Toronto), Open Waters Festival (Halifax) and the Scotia Festival of Music (Nova Scotia). She is also the Artistic Director of the Halifax based contemporary vocal music society Vocalypse Productions, through which she has produced and performed in many new works including: Vonda de Ville in Temporal Follies (2008) by Lukas Pearse, a jazz opera by New York's D.D. Jackson entitled Trudeau: Long March / Shining Path (2009), 3 new mini operas entitled HOWL (2013) based on Ginsberg's famous rant, Miss Fortune's Portmanteau (2014), a one hour show concerning women from Victorian Halifax, Montreal Tim Brady's new opera Ghost Tango (2015), and Escape to Freedom (2019) by Halifax's Sandy Moore concerning the Mona Parson's escape from a Nazi work camp.

Her orchestral premieres include: 7 songs entitled We're Hardcore based on texts by the Tragically Hip's Gordon Downie with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Jerome Blais' Songs for Milena with Symphony Nova Scotia. She can be heard on many CD's, including Live Wired (2015), on which she premiered (Un)Forgotten Voices (first prize in the Concours Collégien de musique contemporaine) by Jerome Blais.

Her company Vocalypse Productions recently produced Hildegard of Bingen's Ordo Virtutum (the first morality play) together with a new work by Canadian composer James Rolfe, inspired by the Bingen. Vocalypse Productions and Newfangled (her duo with pianist Barbara Pritchard) are commissioning a new work from Montreal composer Marie Pelletier entitled Supra Sopra which touches on new technology and man made energy sources.

She has also been composing for solo voice since 2017. In 2020 she completed her 3rd solo vocal work entitled Oh Death, based on a suite of poetry by visual artist Annie Martin. Oh Death was presented in Upstream Music Associations' OPEN WATERS Festival 2021. She will also be presenting it as part of an experimental audio-visual installation together with paintings by Annie Martin.

Janice Isabel Jackson continues to gain support for her activities through grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and Arts Nova Scotia. In recognition of her contribution to Nova Scotia's artistic and cultural life, she has received awards from both the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia and The Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council. And for her commitment to the performance of new Canadian music, she received the Friend of Canadian Music Award from the Canadian League of Composers and the Canadian Music Centre.