

BIO

Diana Panton

vocal

Diana Panton is one of the brightest lights on the jazz scene today. Her work has been consistently praised by listeners and music critics alike for her ethereal vocals, exceptional song selection and raw emotional intensity. Panton's keen aesthetic sense attracted the attention of some of the jazz world's most respected masters, including Don Thompson (Officer of the Order of Canada) and Reg Schwager (Member of the Order of Canada) who together form her regular trio. "When the great singer Sheila Jordan said, Diana Panton 'sounds like the sweetest bird you'll ever hear', she helped define some of the ephemeral delicacy that marks Panton as unique." (Stuart Broomer, *Toronto Life*)

Before recording her first album, Panton completed an Honours Master's degree in French literature and fulfilled a teaching engagement at the University of Paris (France), followed by a position as a French Sessional Lecturer at McMaster University (Canada). She studied art in Paris and currently teaches French Immersion Art at Westdale Secondary (Canada).

When the time finally arrived to release her first solo album (2005), the late great Montreal jazz critic Len Dobbin called *...yesterday perhaps* one of the finest debut CDs he had heard in years! It landed Diana on the covers of *VIEW* and *NOW Magazine* and the album made *NOW's* TOP 10 Discs of the Year. The album was also awarded a Silver Disc Award upon its release in Japan in 2011.

Since her initial CD release, Panton's impressive catalogue of internationally acclaimed self-produced albums have garnered numerous honours, including two JUNO wins, a second Silver Disc Award in Japan, eight JUNO nominations, nine Hamilton Music Awards, a host of National Jazz Award nominations, Canadian and American Independent Music Award nominations, including Best Audiophile Recording at the Rocky Mountain International HiFi Press Awards. Panton was a first-place jury-selection to perform at the *Jazz à Juan Révélation*s in France where she was voted *Première Dauphine* by the Juan public.

Panton's albums have topped the charts on Amazon and iTunes in Canada and the US, the HMV chart in Hong Kong and Japan and Books.com in Taiwan. She has charted on Billboard's Top 10 and went to Number 1 on Amazon.com's Movers and Shakers Chart for the highest percentage increase of sales (in any genre) within a 24-hour period, following an interview on NPR. Her albums have made the year-end lists of *ICI Musique*, *NOW Magazine*, *The Ottawa Citizen*, *The Hamilton Spectator*, *DownBeat Magazine*, etc.

Panton's latest release, **soft winds and roses**, highlights modern classics from the 1960s onward infused with that "je ne sais quoi" that defines her signature sound. Panton has the gift of alchemy to transform any song (popular, obscure, new or old) and make it sound like her own. Intertwined with her intoxicating vocals are accompaniment and solos of the finest quality. Don Thompson (O.C.) plays as though in conversation with Panton - hanging off her every word, sensing her every breath and responding in kind. Reg Schwager (C.M.) dazzles with shimmering runs, yet always understated and in support of the lyric. This music seeps under your skin, blooms in your heart and remains there, affirming that this sonic elixir is something rare and special.

Panton is the recipient of a 2022 Hamilton Arts Creator Award nomination, a 2019 Significant Person Award (Hamilton), a 2018 Westdale Wall of Distinction inductee, the 2017 Woman of Distinction in Arts/Culture/Design by the Hamilton YWCA, the 2017 OSSTF Wayne Clark Teaching Award, a 2017 Hamilton Wentworth District School Board's Profiling Excellence distinction, the 2016 Hamilton Arts Award for Music. She has been a featured host on CBC Radio. Previous Tonic radio host Tim Tamashiro named her one of Canada's TOP 5 Jazz Vocalists and the listenership at JAZZ.FM voted Panton onto their list of the Top 25 of Canada's Most Significant Jazz Musicians.