

## **ROBIN CONNELL Biography**

Jazz pianist-singer, **Robin Connell**, the [Artprize 2016 jazz music award recipient](#), and the West Michigan Jazz Society's [2017 Musician of the Year](#), follows in the tradition of singer-pianists Diana Krall, and Blossom Dearie, tickling the ivories with [original arrangements](#) of time honored jazz standards. Originally from Detroit, she honed her craft in New York City, at places such as The Waldorf-Astoria, bringing the sophistication of [The Great American Songbook](#) to life in her own charming and [inimitable way](#). An accomplished musician, Robin performs regularly as bandleader or side-woman throughout the Midwest ([Chris Kjørness Trio](#), [Beer City Saxes](#), [Randy Marsh Trio](#), and others) and hosts the jazz piano concert series, [Jazz in the Sanctuary at Fountain Street Church](#).

Robin's CD titled, [Eddie's Here](#), features her quartet-sextet and includes her husband, Paul Brewer, trombone/vocals, and a masterful rhythm section that gets audiences tapping their toes and out of their chairs! She also co-leads a group with R&B/Jazz vocalist, [Kathy Lamar](#).

Enthusiastic about jazz education, Robin's teaching credits include twenty summers as jazz faculty at the Interlochen Center for the Arts where she met husband, Paul Brewer, several summers at the Aquinas Jazz Camp, and one at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. As a Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of Northern Colorado she directed Combo I, winning multiple Downbeat awards, leading to an artist residency at Garden City Community College that culminated in her first CD recording, [Travelin'](#).

She currently teaches jazz studies at Aquinas College, co-directs the [St Cecilia Youth Jazz Ensembles](#), and travels for stints at schools and festivals as guest artist/clinician/adjudicator. She, and Paul, enjoy including a student or two in their performances as they 'pass the torch' to the younger ones ([Connell-Brewer Band at Buttermilk Jambouree](#)).

With a Doctorate of Arts in Music Composition, and composer of many instrumental works, Robin is the winner of multiple arts grants at the national and state levels. Her several commissions include *Derailed*, a work for the 1998 Massachusetts All-State jazz band, for which she was also the conductor. The Grand Rapids Jazz Orchestra regularly performs her pieces, with *Hip Hop Gidget*, included on their recording, *Jazz on Tap*.

Lecture performances on the Great American Songbook are among her favorite 'gigs' with recent appearances including [Calvin College Notes At Noon](#), Forest Hills Learning Cafe, and OLLIE at Aquinas College.

[www.robinconnell.com](http://www.robinconnell.com)