

Tara Davidson

Tara Davidson is an award-winning alto and soprano saxophonist who has performed around the world at such prestigious venues as New York City's Carnegie Hall, the acclaimed North Sea Jazz Festival in the Netherlands, the International Jazz Festival in Lima, Peru, the JZ Jazz Club in Shanghai, China, and The Kennedy Center, in Washington, D.C.

Davidson is a ten-time JUNO nominated artist. As a bandleader, Davidson has produced six recordings since 2004 and performed on approximately thirty recordings as a side musician. Four of her six recordings as a leader or co-leader have been nominated by the JUNO Awards for "Album of the Year" in the "Traditional", "Solo" and "Group" jazz categories. Her bands have been comprised of various configurations from duo to nonet and have included such personnel as Mike Murley (saxophone), William Carn (trombone), Laila Biali (piano), Kelly Jefferson (saxophone), Andrew Downing (bass and cello), David Braid (piano), and Ernesto Cervini (drums), among many others. Davidson has been associated with six additional JUNO nominations for her work as a side musician with Andrew Downing's Otterville, Ernesto Cervini's Turboprop (x2), the Mike Murley Septet, CBC Records' "Jazz Legends Live" project, and Jens Lindemann's Order of Canada Band (Yamaha Big Band member). Ernesto Cervini's Turboprop took home the JUNO Award in 2020 for Jazz Album of the Year: Group.

Some of Davidson's other honours include being selected as the lead alto saxophonist for the European Broadcasting Union's "European Youth Jazz Orchestra", being selected as one of five finalists in the Mary Lou Williams "Women In Jazz" saxophone competition, and being selected as one of three finalists for the Toronto Arts Foundation's "Emerging Jazz Artist Award" in 2015. In 2013, Davidson was awarded the Ontario Arts Council's "Chalmers Professional Development Grant" to study with saxophone legend, Dick Oatts, in New York City.

Davidson also enjoys a diverse freelance career as a woodwind player (saxophone, clarinet, and flute). She has worked with musical theatre companies such as the Stratford Festival, the Musical Stage Company (formally Acting Upstage), and Drayton Entertainment, and with such symphonies as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the National Ballet Orchestra, and the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Studio and performance opportunities have allowed Davidson to perform alongside such artists as Joel Frahm, Shirley Bassey, Oliver Jones, Tommy Banks, Wycliffe Gordon, Emilie-Claire Barlow, Phil Dwyer, Jim McNeely, Ingrid Jensen, Christine Jensen, Brad Turner, John Riley, and Gary Versace.

Davidson is an active educator. She is on faculty at University of Toronto, York University, and the National Music Camp of Canada (Jazz Faculty). Davidson has been a guest faculty member for Ottawa's Jazzworks Jazz Camp, the Interprovincial Music Camp (IMC Jazz Faculty), Saskatoon's TD Jazz Intensive Workshop, and the Stanford Jazz Workshop.

Tara Davidson is proud to be a Yamaha Artist and plays their Custom Z alto saxophone, Custom CSVR clarinet, and YFL-577 Series flute.