

Brenda Earle Stokes
Formal Long Bio (452 words)

Brenda Earle Stokes a pianist and vocalist skilled in the fields of classical, jazz, pop, rock, R&B and Music Theater. Her curiosity and voracious appetite for music has led her to become a versatile musician sought after as both performer and educator.

As a performer, Brenda has worked as both pianist and vocalist as a leader and side person across the US and internationally. She has performed at the Kennedy Center, Avery Fischer Hall, The Toronto Jazz Festival, The Christchurch Arts Festival in New Zealand and at Carnegie Hall, with artists such as trombonist Wycliffe Gordon, stage legend Maurice Hines, the Desoff Symphonic Chorus and many others. She even opened for 80s super band Duran Duran! As a conductor, Brenda spent 8 years directing the New York Summer Music Festival's Jazz Choir and was the Artistic Director of the Rutgers University Queens Chorale. She worked as an Episcopal Music Director and organist for several years and spent ten years as an early childhood music teacher. In any given week, you might find Brenda singing with a classical choir, playing piano in a jazz club, playing keyboard and singing backup in a top 40 band or accompanying a Broadway singer.

Because of Brenda's diverse musical skills and interests, she attracts students with a wide range of interests and goals, from professional and pre-professional to children and teens to adults wanting to learn for fun and personal development. Her students have sung on Broadway, in national commercials, have recorded solo albums and have been accepted to performing arts high schools and top conservatories in the US and Canada. She is skilled at creating customized courses of study that serve each of her student's unique needs and interests.

Brenda has served on the faculties of Fordham University, the New York Summer Music Festival, the Grammy-winning Brooklyn Youth Chorus and the Diller-Quaile School of Music. She has given workshops and masterclasses at high schools, colleges and teacher trainings in voice, jazz, piano skills and career development.

Brenda has been active in music outreach and served at over 50 New York City public schools through the Midori and Friends Foundation and the New York Pops Educational outreach program. She spent 10 years as artist in residence at the Ronald McDonald House, where she made music with seriously ill children and their families.

Since 2018, Brenda has created a suite of online courses which is now called The Versatile Musician. This membership site consists of a library of hundreds of videos and downloads as well as personal support from Brenda herself. With hundreds of students worldwide, the online courses are helping musicians all over the world improve their skills in measurable ways.