

STANDARD MEL

JAZZ STANDARDS WITH EXCEPTIONAL STYLE



Mel Collins is a chanteuse, a songstress, a star in the mold of yesteryear's greats. Based in Los Angeles, Mel Collins has performed all over the world, bringing the joy of her unique song stylings to thousands upon thousands of people. Whether it's crooning a jazz standard or belting a pop hit, Mel consistently brings audiences to their feet. She's warm and funny. Her joy is contagious. Let Mel Collins take you away, be it with her versatile ensemble, [Standard Mel](#) or the swinging' big sounds of the [D. Ben-jamin Big Band](#) – wherever she's going, you'll want to go too.

"Mel's presentation has every element needed to WIN and to create something absolutely fresh, with a brilliant future. She's deeply rooted in the tradition of the great black female blues and jazz singers. Absolutely in a class by herself. She projects the positive energy needed today, to lift peoples spirit and to elevate the music to much higher spiritual levels."

- Bennie Maupin, Saxophonist | Herbie Hancock, Miles Davis and Lee Morgan



[A Little Jazz Now & Then](#)

Mel Collins debut album

backed by the incredible D. Ben-Jamin Big Band

Track list includes: The Song Is You, Our Love Is Here To Stay, A Tisket a Tasket, Honeysuckle Rose, At Last, Rendezvous, Better Than Anything, Diggin' Me, Good Man Blues, Ordinary People



Meet Mel Collins

Mel Collins was born and raised in Hacienda Heights, CA, just outside Los Angeles. The youngest of four children, she was surrounded by music from the start. Her mother played "a little piano" and her father played the organ at their church in Los Angeles. He was also the Director of the So. Cal. State Youth Choir, a renowned gospel choir that Mel spent many nights listening to.

From an early age, she idolized Ella Fitzgerald and Nancy Wilson, and sang in her church choir. But she never considered a career as a vocalist until she attended Citrus College, where she entered as a communications major and was also taking acting courses. "I was walking down a hallway in the music department because it was a shortcut to the drama room, and a director heard me singing and humming and said 'Hey, come in here.' That's how it all started. I love to tell stories. My first love was acting, not singing. That's how I got into musical theatre, by combining my two loves."

So began Mel's career in musical theatre. She has enjoyed starring roles in numerous productions including *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, and the touring company of *Purlie*. She also landed a full-time gig at Disneyland in the standing production of *Animazement*. She continues to perform regularly at Disneyland in multiple roles (singing everything from Christmas carols to jazz standards to "The Circle of Life"), an affiliation that has lasted over 15 years.

It was at Disneyland in her role as Queeny, backed by the Royal Street Bachelors, that Mel found herself singing jazz standards made famous by her childhood idols, Ella and Nancy. "What I love about Nancy is the passion she brings to what she's singing, I can always hear the story being told. And [Ella's] musicianship is by far higher than any other female vocalist. I try to take from both of those and put them together. With standards, I still get to tell a story. I always bring a little acting to whatever I'm singing. I can't separate them."

Her solo career began in 2009, when she decided to put together her own cabaret show. She hadn't previously thought of herself as a lead vocalist outside the context of a musical. "I loved being in the choir; in the background. I loved doing group scenes, I hated doing monologues. I wanted to be part of a team." But her team mentality was sometimes overshadowed by her striking physical presence. "I always thought of myself as 'fourth alto from the left,' but being six feet tall, it's hard for me to blend into the background. I realized 'why not go with it?' The second I made that decision was when everything blew up." She approached composer, arranger and trombonist Duane Benjamin, whose credentials were well established through his work for Disney among many others. Duane wrote her arrangements for the cabaret show and put together a small band to back her up. Her first show sold out, as did the next one she did six months later.

At the second show, clarinetist Vince Verdi was in the audience, scouting for a vocalist to feature in his band, *The Side Street Strutters*. By the end of the night, he knew he had found his front-woman. It was in this band that Mel's ethos as a lead vocalist crystallized. "When you're fronting a band, you have to be in control and all the focus is on you. But the way I get around that is by telling myself I'm still part of a team—the band is here and the audience is a part of it and we're all working together for a good show." Mel performs regularly with the *Side Street Strutters*, touring the country on a circuit of theatres and festivals.

Meanwhile, Mel's collaboration with Duane Benjamin has put her at the helm of an 18-piece big band, with Duane as her musical director and band leader. Their debut album, *A Little Jazz Now & Then*, was released in the fall of 2013. She also performs as the leader of smaller, more intimate groups of varying size and instrumentation, collectively referred to as "Standard Mel".

In addition to her most frequent role fronting a band, Mel's versatility and knack for story telling has afforded her opportunities to branch out into different types of work in and around Los Angeles. She has sung on soundtracks for numerous TV shows including *Hannah Montana* and *7th Heaven*, and performed as a voiceover artist for *Modern Family*, *Vampire Diaries*, *Sesame Street Live*, *Hershey's*, and *Disney on Ice*. She has also amassed an impressive resume as a backup singer behind such artists as John Tesh, Heather Headly, Burt Bacharach, and as part of the house band on *America's Got Talent*. She also performed as M.C. for an event commemorating Disneyland's 50th anniversary, leading a Q & A with featured guest Julie Andrews.

Regardless of what role she steps into on a given day, Mel is preceded by her reputation as a masterful vocalist, generous performer and consummate professional.



People Are Talking

"Meloney is an amazing talent who can kick the ass of any song she sings! I am a fan for life."

Kathy Najimy | Actress/Director

"Praise to Meloney! She has 'on the spot' courage to create...she does a FABULOUS job!"

Sheldon Epps | Television Director/Producer

"No one sings these songs like Meloney Collins. It's smooth, sweet, and sexy. Her voice is perfect for this music!"

Eden Espinosa | star of the Broadway productions of WICKED and RENT

"Where do I start with someone I love as much as Meloney Collins? I've worked with her for years, and there is no one I'd rather work with or be with for that matter. Not only is she an amazing singer, she's an amazing person who's spirit soars like her voice. She is the consummate professional in every sense of the word. She's a gifted singer whether in the studio or live on stage. She reads, she interprets, she blends, and her voice is like an angel's. She's money."

Bret Simmons | Music Director of The Megan Mullaly Show

"I have had the opportunity to work with Meloney on several occasions, and it's always an enjoyable experience. She possesses a great sense of style, whether taking the lead or as part of a group. She has a keen sense of pitch & rhythm and is an asset in any musical situation. She also has a wonderful, positive energy that is infectious and benefits the entire cast."

Ron Colvard | Musical Director of the National Tour of Hairspray

"Meloney Collins is a dynamic singer"

Stage Scene LA

"Meloney Collins is Amazing"

Backstage West



Song List

Standard Mel Song List

(9 pieces or smaller)

- All Of Me
- All or Nothing at All
- Almost Like Being In Love
- Angel Eyes
- A Nightingale Sang in Barkley Square
- At Last
- A Tisket A Tasket
- Avalon
- Beginning To See The Light
- Better Than Anything
- Bewitched
- Blue Skies
- Cartoon Classic Jazz Medley
- Comes Love
- Diggin' Me
- Do Don't Get Around Much Anymore
- Do Nothin' till You Hear From Me
- Drifting
- Fly Me To The Moon
- Honeysuckle Rose
- How About You
- How High The Moon
- I Can't Give You Anything But Love
- I Could Write A Book
- I Get A Kick Out of You
- In A Sentimental Mood
- It Had To Be You
- It's Alright with Me
- I've Got The World On A String
- I Want You Back
- Let's Fall In Love
- L-O-V-E
- Love Is Here To Stay
- Lover Come back To Me
- Miss Celie's Blues
- Moonlight in Vermont
- My Romance
- Night and Day
- One Note Samba
- Our Love Is Here to Stay
- Orange Colored Sky
- Ordinary People
- Paper Moon
- Perhaps
- Route 66
- Satin Doll
- School House Rock Medley
- Secret Love
- Song Is You
- Sophisticated lady
- Straighten Up and Fly Right
- Stompin' At The Savoy
- Summertime
- Sway
- S'Wonderful
- Taking A Chance On Love
- That Ol' Black Magic
- That's All
- The Girl From Ipanema
- The More I See You
- Them There Eyes
- The Nearness of You
- The Way You Look Tonight
- The Very Thought of You
- They Can't Take That Away From Me
- Thou Swell
- Too Darn Hot
- Unforgettable
- You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To
- What A Little Moonlight Can Do