

SEMENYA McCORD

..... vocalist/music educator/composer, earned her degree in Music Education from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois. Daughter of the late singer/guitarist Ken Henderson, she started her graduate study at University of Massachusetts in Amherst where she worked with Horace C. Boyer, Max Roach, and Archie Shepp. While in Amherst, she composed 19 songs for the play "Tomorrow Has Been Here and Gone," and composed and recorded the title song for Archie Shepp's "Trumpet In My Soul" LP (Arista). McCord has been performing throughout New England since 1975, developing programs and facilitating residencies featuring spirituals, blues, traditional and contemporary jazz for audiences of all ages through the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Young Audiences of Massachusetts, Inc., and the New England Foundation for the Arts. In 1988, she was awarded "Outstanding Jazz Vocalist" in by the Boston Music Awards; and received the "Martin Luther King, Jr. Award" for Musical Excellence" in 1990 from the City of Boston.

McCord is one of four featured soloists on "Apartment House 1776" by John Cage, released on "John Cage Orchestral Works ", by Mode Records in 1994. McCord's debut CD, "Good For Me!" was released on WeJazz Records in September 1996. She received the "Commonwealth Award" in the Artist category from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and Massachusetts Advocates for the Arts, Sciences and Humanities in 1997. She was inducted into the "Steppin' Out" Jazz Hall of Fame in Boston in November of 2002.

As Artistic Director of Hemisphere Associates, a collaboration of New England performing artists, she has directed annual tributes to the life and "dream" of Martin Luther King, Jr., the music of Billie Holiday, and community events such as "Kaleidoscope" that celebrate cultural diversity through the arts.

From 1991 to 2003, McCord taught part-time at the University of Massachusetts in Dartmouth, teaching "The Art of Rock & Roll" and "Jazz: A Listener's Guide". She also taught private voice students at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, the New England Conservatory's Preparatory and Continuing Education Division in Boston, and the Applied Music Program at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts.

McCord returned home to Galesburg, IL to assist her mother in the fall of 2003; however, she continues to perform, teach jazz voice at Knox College and Carl Sandburg Community College; and remains an active member of the International Association for Jazz Education, Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity, and the Music Educators National Conference. She was recognized with an Alumni Achievement Award by Knox College in February, 2006. She completed her Masters degree in Jazz Studies at Northern Illinois University in May 2006.