

# Grace Testani Bio

"If you like your singers bold and sassy, Grace Testani delivers on both counts."

~ Patricia Myers, JazzTimes

★★★★ All Music Guide pick

It was a long journey from the small town of Endicott in upstate New York to the stages and clubs of New York City. In making the journey, Grace Testani never forgot the warm evenings with her Italian working class family, gathered with relatives and a few bottles of wine, singing songs of the old country to the accompaniment of accordions, mandolins and guitars. Their exuberance and love for music, a sheer joy of performing, was incorporated by Grace in a musical presence and vocal style which now places her in the vanguard of jazz vocalists.



A singer in the tradition of Annie Ross, Anita O'Day, Sarah Vaughn, Billie Holiday, Eddie Jefferson and Ella Fitzgerald, Grace combines lyrical and ethereal scatting - reminiscent of the great "bop" players - with a technically precise harmonic range and the kind of risk taking that few jazz singers attempt in their careers. She can infuse pop standards and show tunes with new life by employing intricate compound rhythms, as in her 5/4 6/8 arrangement of Lerner and Loews's *Show Me* or her funky 6/4 arrangement of *Bill Withers' Ain't No Sunshine When She's Gone*.

Grace's forte is bringing together the finest musicians, creating an ensemble experience that allows each member of the group to express his or her virtuosity, creating an excitement in the group with her arrangements and leadership, which is then communicated to and experienced by the audience. Her music is appreciated by jazz purists and, at the same time, is accessible and enjoyed by large and varied groups of non-jazz aficionados. People have even been known to get up and dance at her New York club performances at **Birdland**, **Blue Note**, **Village Gate** and others!



In addition to her arranging, Grace is also a composer and is co-writer with **Chick Corea** and **Kenny Barron**. Her current recording, ***Something's Coming***, is receiving national and international airplay and media coverage.

Grace has appeared in a Japanese TV documentary about world-renown trumpeter, **Teramasa Hino**, has open twice for **Sonny Fortune** and was even in **The Godfather II**.

A former actress and co founder of the *Capital Rep Theatre Company* and the *Castillo Cultural Center*, Grace communicates a dramatic and impassioned presence with sensitive lyrics adapted to works recognized originally as instrumentals. Her natural ease with a wide ranging repertoire that includes swing, ballads, Latin (including Salsa and Samba), jazz and original works derives from her depth of experience as a composer, arranger and solo pianist. Grace has performed in numerous musical theatre productions as well as with her own quintet and is often featured on the roster of benefit performances in the New York City area.

In addition to singing, arranging, composing and playing keyboards, Grace is on the faculty of New York University – SCPS where she teaches the Vocal Jazz courses, is the Director and founder of the **Singers Center - Sing Jazz and More™**, a learning and networking center for singers in New York City and Online. She has also been on the faculties of **The New School** (the Guitar Study Center), **Drummers Collective/ SOJ Contemporary Music Studios** and **The Hebrew Arts School** (Abraham Goodman House), a tutor for **New York University** (Gallatin Division) and **Empire State College**. She has adjudicated at the **Reno, NV Jazz Festival** and has co-lead workshops with **Sheila Jordan**, **Jay Clayton**, and **Janet Lawson** in other jazz festivals. **Grace is also available for clinics, workshop, adjudication, and residencies.**



"... She showed that she has listened well. She bent notes, stretched phrases, scatted and melismatized with the best of them."

~ NY Post

"...A risk-taking singer with an impressive range and an appealing, slightly husky voice... Testani gives us reason to be optimistic about the future of jazz singing.

~ LA Jazz Scene

"... Grace gave a terrific show, moving easily from ballads to Bossa Nova to blues. She was clearly enjoying herself and she communicated this enthusiasm very effectively.

For an encore, the group performed an old Bill Withers' tune that was so good it left the audience begging for more!"

~ New York Alliance newspaper

"... If you like swing, Latin rhythms, sonorous ballads and jumpy bebop, you'll love Grace Testani, a sensitive and versatile performer in the current generation of jazz vocalists."

~ National Alliance newspaper

"... Grace is equally comfortable singing standards or mainstream jazz instrumentals with lyrics. Her sense of the jazz tradition, her respect of the lyric, her interpretations and improvisation, and her ability to "swing" in any situation, make her performances always a unique and enjoyable experience."

~ Jazz World Index

"...Her version of Kenny Barron's "Morning Sunshower" is a gem. ... Recommended Listening!

~ Canadian Radio



**Grace Notes  
Music**

a division of

**Grace Notes Enterprises**

PO Box 229

Cathedral Station

New York, NY 10025-0229

**212-222-6632**

**SingersCenter.com**

**info@singerscenter.com**