

Kathryn (Kat) Sherman is a jazz vocalist, composer, arranger, and teaching artist based in Chicago, IL.

Performing regularly in duo settings, with small combos, and with big bands, Kat has released recordings with jazz bassist Hannah Marks (Alone Together) and math rock band Giraffe House (Folding Chair Fathers, Leafy Greens, Toxic, Passenger). She has also been a featured vocalist on recordings with the University of North Texas Jazz Singers (directed by Jennifer Barnes), the Two O’Clock Lab Band (directed by Rob Parton), and with independent artists. She is currently composing and arranging music for her debut album as a bandleader, which will be recorded in Fall 2025 and released in Spring 2026. Kat also works regularly as a studio vocalist, recording choral demos and jazz ensemble projects in studios across the Midwest and from her home studio. She has won awards as a soloist, including the award for Best Graduate Jazz Voice Soloist from Downbeat magazine.

With significant experience directing vocal jazz ensembles and contemporary vocal groups, Kat also regularly works as a composer and arranger, creating custom works for middle, high school, and collegiate groups across the country. In particular, she writes often for SSAA, SAB, and SATB choirs, and groups under her direction/performing her work have been awarded Downbeat Student Music Awards and performed on significant stages, like at the Jazz Education Network conference and various state honors vocal jazz ensembles. In 2025, Kat was commissioned by the Jazz Education Network to compose a piece to be premiered at their 2026 conference.

In demand as an ensemble director, voice teacher, and clinician, Kat is on the Jazz Studies faculty at DePaul University, teaching applied jazz voice lessons, directing the Downbeat-award winning DePaul Vocal Jazz Ensemble and a small jazz combo, and teaching several Group Jazz Piano and Jazz Ear Training courses. In 2025, she was awarded the Monsignor Kenneth J. Velo Distinguished Professorship, an honor for which she was nominated by her colleagues. She has given masterclasses on a variety of performance and arranging/compositional topics at JazzVoice.com, Indiana University, the Illinois Music Educators Association, and Anchor Music’s Vocal Jazz Academy. Kathryn is passionate about building an inclusive learning environment, where she helps all students build a diverse set of skills to prepare them for a wide variety of future career opportunities. Previously, she worked as a small ensemble coach at Indiana University and with Bloomington Expressive Arts Training (BEAT) as a staff arranger, vocal director, and member of the BEAT band.

Kat holds a MM in Jazz Studies from the University of North Texas and a BM in Jazz Studies from Indiana University.