

# **Musician & Artist**

## **KAT WALKER**



**Bio:** Singing Jazz with a twist of painterly expressionism and rhythmical guttural sweat, **Kat Walker** throws her inner-self on a blank canvas for the audience to feel and taste. Her improvisational scat singing is meaty, raw, and juicy. Its as though Kat takes each song on a journey, marching to an expressive rhythm of her own, while always coming back to pay homage to the melodies of the great American songwriters of our time.

As a kid, Kat had countless piano lessons creating the beginnings of her exploration in music. As a young woman she was the first woman golfer to compete on the men's team while she was a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point among the third class of women. Maybe that is why she has such a scratchy voice (from being barked orders at and learning to bark orders herself). Kat has a BA in Theater Arts with a minor in dance from PLU in Tacoma, Washington in addition, she completed two extra semesters as a Music Major at Los Angeles City College.

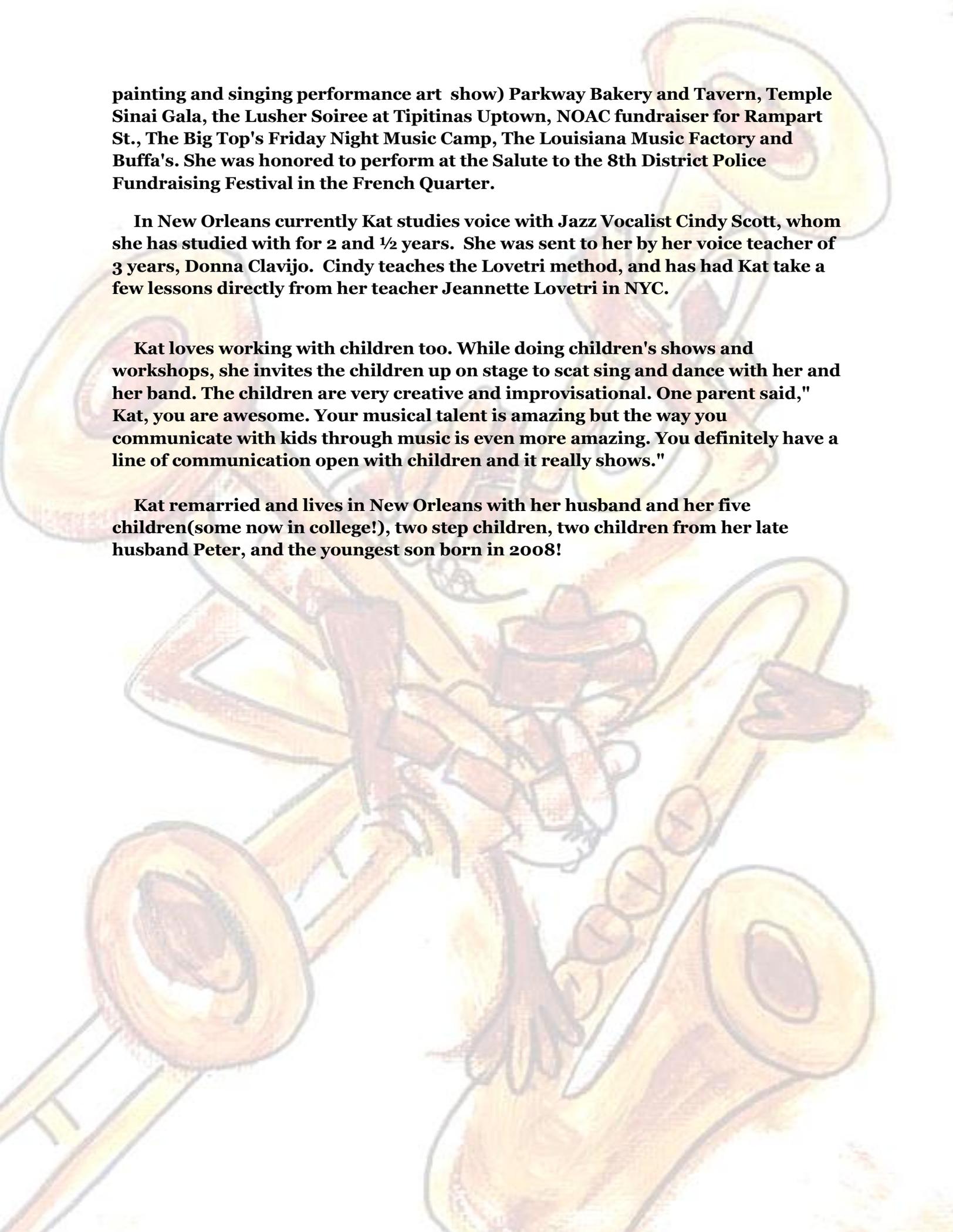
In Seattle, Kat performed lead roles in many musical theater shows, including, Velma Kelly in "Chicago," Sylvia in "Two Gentlemen of Verona," Chava in "Fiddler on The Roof, at the Performance circle Theater, " Mazzeppa in "Gypsy, at the Seattle Civic Light Opera, " and Daily News in the Chad Henry, AM Collins World Premier musical "Do It for the Money" at Pioneer Square Theater. Also, Kat and a fellow songwriter in Seattle created a Cabaret show, called the Cabaradio Hour, a funny, slice of theater with original skits and music. While in Seattle, she took 3 summers of Olympia Summer Dance Intensive and studied piano with Joni Metcalf, and voice from Maestro David Kyle. Kat had the fortunate opportunity to see two amazing performers whose talent made an indelible impression on the way she perceived vocal music, a double bill at the Seattle Folk Life Festival, Ella Fitzgerald and Bobby McFerrin! The seed was planted!

While in Los Angeles, Kat, still using her theatrical style, fronted a performance art rock band, using skits and props and original songs, and called it Kat & The Rhythm Rats her group opened for Chuck E. Weiss at the Central (now the Viper Room) on Sunset Blvd. and they played venues such as Cafe Largo and the famous Whiskey A Go-Go, she also sang some blues at (venues like Mama Pajama's and Molly Malones.)

Meanwhile as she was completing her semesters as a music major Kat met a man who would later become her husband, the late (sadly died of cancer in 2001) great playwright and visual artist Peter Walker (a Cooper Union Grad, he had many one man shows in New York, and all over US including notable Terry Dintenfass Gallery, has work in permanent museum collections including, Butler Institute of American Art) Kat performed in and wrote much of the music for this Neo-Vaudeville Musical "Big Bad Bubba's Bourbon Street Bar" in West Los Angeles created by Peter. She and Peter had two children together. She apprenticed for 8 years under Peter doing much of his under painting.

Peter was a major influence for Kat's endeavors into the art world. Kat's fine art ranges from painting, to assemblage, to papier mache sculptures. Kat has had solo and group exhibitions in different venues in New Orleans including the Crescent City Brewhouse, Oak Street Café, the Big Top Gallery, Salon Dante, The Healing Center, Femme fest at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, and Mid City Theater, The Ark, The Pickery, and Kat was guest artist for a month at the museum shop at the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) The Arts Council of New Orleans picked her painting "Blue Trumpet Highway" to be a NOLA for life semifinalist! She does many commissioned pieces for private clients. She was commissioned by the American Theatre Critic's Association to draw the cover of their brochure for their conference in New Orleans last April. She can be found painting and selling her art and drawing caricatures at Jackson Square where she has had an artist's license for 10 years. She owns her own company called Local Color Design which books specialty artistic entertainment for events (Peter and she cofounded)! Kat has enjoyed drawing caricatures of many conventioners from all over the world at their private events since 1996. (The Jazz Skat Gumbo CD cover caricatures were drawn by Kat intertwining, herself and all of the musicians in the band, each being a part of the other, in a flaming hot pot of New Orleans Gumbo).

Kat found her way back to that young woman who was influenced by Ella Fitzgerald and Bobby McFerrin in Seattle. Add a little Mel Torme, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Louis Prima, Gene Krupa, Sara Vaughn, all of the Great American Songwriters, and one of Kat's biggest passions, Broadway musicals, and find Kat in New Orleans singing the music she loves. Some of Kat's jazz performance highlights over the years include; The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, The New Orleans Museum of Art, Thursdays At Twilight Garden Concert Series, The New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, French Quarter Festival, for Ladyfest at Sweet Lorraines, and at the Healing center where she had a



**painting and singing performance art show) Parkway Bakery and Tavern, Temple Sinai Gala, the Lusher Soiree at Tipitinas Uptown, NOAC fundraiser for Rampart St., The Big Top's Friday Night Music Camp, The Louisiana Music Factory and Buffa's. She was honored to perform at the Salute to the 8th District Police Fundraising Festival in the French Quarter.**

**In New Orleans currently Kat studies voice with Jazz Vocalist Cindy Scott, whom she has studied with for 2 and 1/2 years. She was sent to her by her voice teacher of 3 years, Donna Clavijo. Cindy teaches the Lovetri method, and has had Kat take a few lessons directly from her teacher Jeannette Lovetri in NYC.**

**Kat loves working with children too. While doing children's shows and workshops, she invites the children up on stage to scat sing and dance with her and her band. The children are very creative and improvisational. One parent said, "Kat, you are awesome. Your musical talent is amazing but the way you communicate with kids through music is even more amazing. You definitely have a line of communication open with children and it really shows."**

**Kat remarried and lives in New Orleans with her husband and her five children(some now in college!), two step children, two children from her late husband Peter, and the youngest son born in 2008!**