

April Varner LONG Bio

“I am music” was one of April’s first proclamations as a very young child and it holds true to this day. Since singing her first notes as a four-year-old, inspired by none other than the Disney Princess movies, her journey toward growing as a musician began. In fact, April has spent the majority of her life performing and competing in the arts.

Born and raised in Toledo, Ohio, April began taking voice lessons at the University of Toledo as a classical vocalist at age 8 and began studying piano from her grandmother at age 6. No stranger to the stage, April began displaying vocal, musical theatre, drama, and piano talents at the local, regional, national, and international levels at a young age. This includes being a guest vocalist at the Toledo Symphony Orchestra Pops Concert, a 2-time All-National Honors Ensemble member in Nashville, TN, and a National Finalist at the Michael Feinstein Great American Songbook Academy in Carmel, IN. By age 16, April had made her Carnegie Hall debut in Weill Hall following a first-place award by the American Protégé International Vocal Competition, and had traveled to Edinburgh, Scotland as part of a drama group to share the stage with world actors at the renowned Edinburgh Arts Fringe Festival.

Influenced by musical artists such as Ella Fitzgerald, Carmen McRae, Eva Cassidy, and Esperanza Spalding, April has a passion for an array of genres ranging from standards from The Great American Songbook, Broadway classics, folk, R&B, Brazilian jazz, Funk, and sacred music.

After undergoing a musical transition into jazz and discovering a deep passion for it following her freshman year, she began to perform regionally with various small jazz groups throughout Bloomington, IN, the greater Indianapolis area, Illinois and Ohio. She also was the lead singer in the professional Rock/Funk/R&B Band, “The Fanatics”, which toured regionally throughout southern and Central Indiana. In addition, April was the director of the Vocal Jazz Ensemble, ResoluSHion, within the Grammy-nominated show choir, The Singing Hoosiers. During her final semester at IU, April was the vocalist in the Du Vido Septet, a Brazilian Jazz Ensemble led by Brazilian composer, arranger and pianist, Guilherme Ribeiro. The group was chosen as one of three finalists within the famed Detroit Jazz Festival’s Collegiate Combo Competition. In the spring of 2020, April graduated with her undergraduate degree in Jazz Studies (Voice).

At the young age of 25, April has performed/studied with an array of renowned artists such as Darmon Meader, Sachal Vasandani, Tierney Sutton, Walter Smith III, Dave Stryker, John Raymond, Kurt Elling, Sunny Wilkinson, Kate McGarry, Dr. Jeremy Fox, Sylvia McNair, Michael Feinstein, Benny Benack III, Theo Bleckmann, Ted Rosenthal, Jean Baylor, Rogerio Boccato and Damien Sneed. April currently resides in New York City where she is actively arranging, composing, and sitting in/performing at various jazz clubs around Manhattan. This has included Mezzrow, the Django, 55 Bar, Dizzy’s Coca-Coca Club, Ornithology Jazz Club, Birdland, and more. Most recently, April graduated in May of 2022 with her Master’s degree in Jazz Voice Performance from the Manhattan School of Music. She also just released her debut EP, entitled “Hummingbird”, available on all streaming services.