

# NELLIE MCKAY BIO

"I admire any artist with the strength of vision to chart her own creative path, and it's hard to imagine a better example than singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist Nellie McKay...her performances are thought-provoking, emotionally affecting, and fun.. her sweet voice and innocent demeanor mask a singular ability to wield the catchiest popular music idioms of the last century in the service of a fiercely independent intellect." - **Renee Fleming**

Nellie has produced an array of wildly varying albums, from *Get Away From Me* ("a tour de force" -The New York Times), *Normal as Blueberry Pie: a Tribute to Doris Day* ("among the killer overhauls of American standards" - The New York Times), to *My Weekly Reader*, music of the 60's (...kicks serious butt. The results are beautiful." - PopMatters)..

On *Obligatory Villagers* ("a brisk nine-song set that plays like the breathless first act of a musical decrying fascism" - SPIN), local Poconos hometown jazz greats Bob Dorough, Phil Woods, and David Liebman contribute their exceptional talents.

Her latest album, *Sister Orchid*, speaks of the night, the outsider, the plaintive wail of those lost at sea. ("the most lonely romantic album imaginable.." - Minneapolis Star-Tribune)

Nellie most recently earned an Ovation nomination for her work as composer/performer in Ethan Coen's *A Play is a Poem* at the Mark Taper Forum Theatre in Los Angeles. She has won a Theatre World Award for her portrayal of Polly Peachum on Broadway in *The Threepenny Opera*, performed onscreen in the films *PS I Love You* and *Downtown Express*, and her music was used in *Rumor Has It*, *Monster-in-Law*, *PS I Love You*, *Gasland*, *Last Holiday*, and *Private Life*.

McKay co-created and starred in the award-winning off-Broadway hit *Old Hats* and has written three acclaimed musical biographies - *I Want to Live!*, the story of Barbara Graham, third woman executed in the gas chamber at San Quentin, *Silent Spring: It's Not Nice to Fool Mother Nature*, an exploration of environmental pioneer Rachel Carson, and *A GIRL NAMED BILL - The Life and Times of Billy Tipton*-named one of the Best Concerts of 2014 by The New York Times. Her latest lady bio is *The Big Molinsky - Considering Joan Rivers* ("unpredictable, thrilling...sardonic wit.." - The New York Times)

McKay's music has been heard on *Mad Men*, *Boardwalk Empire*, *Weeds*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *NCIS*, *Nurse Jackie*, and *SMILF*, and she has appeared on TV shows including *The Late Show with David Letterman*, *Conan*, *Ferguson*, and *The View*. Nellie has made numerous radio appearances on NPR's *Mountain Stage*, *A Prairie Home Companion*, *eTown*, and *Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz*.

The Chase Brock Experience produced a ballet around her third album, *Obligatory Villagers*, and she contributed the forward to the 20th anniversary edition of *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. Her writing has also appeared in *The Onion*, *Interview*, and *The New York Times Book Review*.

A recipient of PETA's Humanitarian Award and the Humane Society's Doris Day Music Award in recognition of her dedication to animal rights, Nellie is an annoyingly vocal critic of capitalism, endless wars, and the two-party system that sustains them.

"McKay comes on as a Harlem Holly Golightly, a social activist with a disarming mastery of pop vernacular." - **Los Angeles Times**

"..ambitious, intriguing, and clever.." - **Billboard**

"McKay must have been genetically engineered under an oyster shell in New Orleans' Frenchman St.. a bizarre sense of busker authenticity... witty, bright, and gloriously inappropriate." - **Theatre Mania**

"A renegade songwriter with an ultraflexible Great American Songbook sensibility. McKay finds modern resonances everywhere.." - **Rolling Stone**

Among Ms. McKay's charms, Mr. Byrne said, are the way she playfully mixes what he called a "tragic noir vibe" with her "wicked sense of humor." - **David Byrne, Wall Street Journal**

"The one thing certain about Ms. McKay is the size and range of her talent.." - **The New York Times**