

Tara Davidson

Tara Davidson is a JUNO Award-winning alto and soprano saxophonist who has performed around the world at such prestigious venues as New York City's Carnegie Hall, the acclaimed North Sea Jazz Festival in the Netherlands, the JZ Jazz Club in Shanghai, China, and The Kennedy Center, in Washington, D.C.

As a bandleader, Davidson has produced seven recordings since 2004 and performed on approximately forty recordings as a side musician. Five of her seven recordings as a leader or co-leader (Carn Davidson 9) have been nominated by the JUNO Awards for "Jazz Album of the Year". Her bands have been comprised of various configurations from duo to nonet and have included such personnel as Mike Murley (saxophone), William Carn (trombone), Laila Biali (piano), Kelly Jefferson (saxophone), Andrew Downing (bass and cello), David Braid (piano), and Ernesto Cervini (drums), among many others. Davidson has been associated with seven additional JUNO nominations for her work as a side musician with Ernesto Cervini's "Joy" project, Andrew Downing's Otterville, Ernesto Cervini's Turboprop (x2), the Mike Murley Septet, CBC Records' "Jazz Legends Live" project, and Jens Lindemann's Order of Canada Band (Yamaha Big Band member). In 2020, Davidson won a JUNO Award for Jazz Album of the Year: Group as a member of Ernesto Cervini's Turboprop.

Some of Davidson's other honours include being selected as the lead alto saxophonist for the Canadian National Jazz Orchestra in 2022 and for the European Broadcasting Union's European Youth Jazz Orchestra in 2008, being selected as one of five finalists in the Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz saxophone competition in 2008 and being selected as one of three finalists for the Toronto Arts Foundation's Emerging Jazz Artist Award in 2015. In 2013, Davidson was awarded the Ontario Arts Council's Chalmers Professional Development Grant to study with saxophone legend, Dick Oatts, in New York City.

Davidson also enjoys a diverse freelance career as a woodwind player (saxophones, clarinet, and flute). She has worked with musical theatre companies such as the Stratford Festival, the Musical Stage Company, and Drayton Entertainment, and with such symphonies as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the National Ballet Orchestra. Studio and performance opportunities have allowed Davidson to perform alongside such artists as Oliver Jones, Joel Frahm, Tommy Banks, Jens Lindemann, Jazzmeia Horn, Emilie-Claire Barlow, Wycliffe Gordon, Phil Dwyer, Dave Douglas, Shirley Bassey, Ingrid Jenson, Christine Jensen, Brad Turner, and John Riley.

Davidson is an active educator. She is on faculty at the University of Toronto and York University.

Tara Davidson is proud to be a Yamaha Artist and plays their Custom Z alto saxophone.