



## VA VIRGINIA SCHENCK VOCAL ARTIST

Virginia Schenck, known by the stage name VA, is an accomplished international vocal artist and jazz performer, utilizing both straight-ahead, spoken word, and free improvisation. VA is an imaginative vocalist with a broad stylistic reach. She can soothe her audience with a beautiful ballad, invigorate them with a re-imagined standard and challenge them with a powerful blast of free improvisation. Yet all of these aspects exist within one singular and unique voice.

VA often spices up her shows with world music influences from her own vocal exploration and CircleSinging, which she studied under the legendary Bobby McFerrin. Last year, she was honored to perform with McFerrin as part of his Atlanta, Ga., *CircleSongs* concert. In addition to performing with him, Virginia was handpicked to put together the exclusive 12-voice ensemble that led McFerrin's *CircleSongs* for the concert. Read more about that [here](#).

A Florida native, VA came to Georgia after graduating from Florida State University. While her degree was in Music Therapy, she studied jazz piano, voice and dance. She started singing jazz gigs while in school, and continued to perform after she launched her music therapy career. Her love of jazz was enriched through a friendship with drummer Jaimoe of the Allman Brothers Band.

Performing regularly in Atlanta's top jazz and music venues, her recent appearances also include New York & Seattle for a play with totally improvised music, "The Gift", with aerial dancers at The Robert Mondavi Ctr/UC-Davis, St Patrick's Cathedral/Dublin, IR, Chartres Cathedral/France, Kripalu Yoga and Retreat Center, and Rome, Italy.

VA has released three critically acclaimed albums, which showcase her artistry. Her debut CD, *VA (2012)*, generated serious buzz with jazz fans, immediately receiving global airplay with such artists as 2012 NEA Jazz Master, Sheila Jordan, who exclaimed, "*Wonderful CD... Wonderful singer!*" Her CDs, *Interior Notions (2015)* and *Aminata Moseka: an Abbey Lincoln Tribute (2017)* have followed similar suit. Her fourth album, *Battle Cry (2020)*, is set for release on January 3.

VA's grandmother, a suffragette in Philadelphia, was pregnant with her mother while campaigning for women's voting rights in the 1920s. Almost a century later, the election of a new President in 2016 touched off a clarion call to arms, which, for Schenck, prompted a commitment to speaking, singing, and advocating in opposition to a rising tide of anti-democratic forces.

Stirred and moved by the current need for civil and human rights action, VA created her latest album *Battle Cry (2020)* to use the power of music to generate change. The message of the new album is not only of resistance, but also of peace, unity, and hope. "Jazz is built on a democratic system and music is my resistance," VA says. "In my song 'Hear My Battle Cry,' I sing, 'I will live in truth or die.' For me, there is no middle ground."

In 2018, VA co-led a pilgrimage to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture with Rev. Kimberly Jackson, an ordained LGBTQ+ Episcopal priest and candidate for the Georgia Senate in 2020, and Dr. Catherine Meeks, executive director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing. She was invited to sing "Strange Fruit," the protest song immortalized by Billie Holiday, in a memorial service for Georgia's historic lynching victims at the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing on the Atlanta University campus.

So many of the messages we hear today speak of division and of exclusion. My role as a vocal artist is not only to entertain and to soothe, but also to challenge, to provoke," says Schenck. "If music is resistance, then jazz is freedom. Resistance is my mission, and freedom is my goal."

Follow Virginia Schenck/VA on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

More information at [www.virginiaschenck.com](http://www.virginiaschenck.com)

**Recordings:**

Battle Cry (Airborne Ecstasy, 2020)

Aminata Moseka – an Abbey Lincoln Tribute (Airborne Ecstasy, 2017)

Interior Notions (Airborne Ecstasy, 2015)

VA (Airborne Ecstasy, 2012)

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