

'Immigrant' Contributions

DOING HER OWN THING

Christine Fawson has an answer for people who ask if she's a vocalist who plays trumpet or a trumpeter who sings: "I'm an entertainer," she says. If you've seen her in concert, you know that's the truth. She brings high energy to the stage and eye-to-eye contact with the audience, directly engaging one person, then another, then another, opening the lines of communication to share the feeling of the songs she's singing and/or trumpeting.

You could say that Fawson's an entertainer with two voices, one emanating from her vocal chords and one from the round brass bell at the end of her trumpet, and she commands both. That's not surprising when you see her résumé.

"I am the youngest of five, and we sang a lot in church. So probably before I talked, I was singing," she says. "And I was singing in front of people, and I was receiving recognition. That's kind of intoxicating for a young child." The trumpet came a bit later, as Fawson emulated her trombone-playing brother Rich.

Raised in the Mormon Church, Fawson followed her siblings to BYU. On scholarship, she attended the Hawaii campus and was in the traveling band, but she felt she needed a more challenging musical education and decided to apply to Berklee College of Music in Boston. Her parents said okay but told her she would have to pay for it herself.

"My father is an entrepreneur, so I learned that you can basically do what you want to do," she says. "You have to have your own kind of vision." Fawson won a full scholarship to the prestigious school, where she also became a member of the faculty for 14 years.

A member of the popular vocal quartet Syncopation (2002–2012), which produced three albums, and the all-female big band DIVA Jazz Orchestra (2004–2009), Fawson has played iconic venues worldwide. As a freelance artist, she's shared her artistry with The Disney Corporation, Bose, and Adele, among others, and as a leader, she has produced four well-received albums. *Christine Faw-*

son Sings Jazz, her latest recording, features lively performances of tunes from the Great American Songbook, with special emphasis on Cole Porter.

Despite the success she enjoyed at Berklee and as a performing artist, Fawson began to feel hemmed in by academia and the demands of the music business. Feeling the need for a little elbow room and the ability to do her own thing, Fawson and her husband, Ross Hill (also a trumpeter), moved to Rio Rancho with their daughter two years ago.

She hit the ground running. In 2018 she produced a Christmas concert in Rio Rancho and she's got another on the burner for this season, featuring the legendary trumpeter Bobby Shew, with whom she's been taking lessons. The entertainment division of her company, Conquer Fear, has also created a jazz music series at the Esther Bone Memorial Library. "In the grand scheme of things, it's a pretty small thing. But I'm doing it, you know, and I'm psyched," she says. "We do radio ads. We've got sponsors. It's legit, you know. And I'm paying the band." The first two concerts, in August and September, featured Entourage Jazz and Abby Maxwell. The final 2019 concert in the series, on October 9, will feature popular vocalist



Entertainer
Christine
Fawson is a
trumpeter and
vocalist.

Patti Littlefield. (Fawson's company is also getting into event-planning services, motivational outreach, and other projects.)

Fawson's also appeared three times at the Outpost Performance Space already and she's working on putting a band together that can eventually tour with her. These days, she's playing with top-drawer NM musicians such as bassist Michael Burt, drummer John Trentacosta, and pianist Jim Ahrend, as well as drummer Cal Haines.

You can try to keep up with her at christinefawson.com, where you can also contact her.