

Beginning her musical studies as a classical pianist and cellist, Ellen Cogen began her vocal studies as a senior at the University of Massachusetts, from which she received the BM in Music Theory. She quickly fell in love with vocal art of all kinds, going on to earn her certification to teach vocal/choral music in the public schools, and her Master of Music in Vocal Performance (classical) from The New England Conservatory of Music.

As a classical singer, she sang art songs, oratorio, and operatic repertoire, but was particularly drawn to the “crossover” style of classical cabaret, performing recitals featuring the music of Kurt Weill, Arnold Schoenberg, Benjamin Britten, and other composers of this genre. She became more and more enamored with jazz, and in the past several years, most of her performing has been as a jazz singer, sometimes accompanying herself, or with a variety of ensembles, from trios to big bands. She is the leader of the jazz fusion group, The Ellen Cogen Ensemble.

As an educator, Ellen has taught middle school and high school, and is Associate Professor of Music at Holyoke Community College and a visiting lecturer at Westfield State University. In addition to her choral direction at schools and colleges, she has led many church and community ensembles, and currently serves as Director of Music at Easthampton Congregational Church. Another love is musical theater, and Ellen has directed many professional, school, and community productions over the years, most recently serving as musical director for Holyoke Community College’s production of “In The Heights”.

She enjoys organizing and performing in tribute concerts and fundraisers, and most recently was organizer/director of the Ella Fitzgerald Centennial Bash (held at HCC and The Log Cabin) and a Joni Mitchell 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday event at Gateway City Arts.

Ellen has played and sung on several recordings, and has recorded 3 CD’s of her own: “Necessary Mystery” (original compositions), “Listen To The Moonlight” (jazz standards), and “Chord of Longing” (an eclectic mix of musical styles ranging from classical to pop, arranged and performed with her duo partner and husband, guitarist John Mason. Ellen lives in Westhampton and has two daughters, Julia and Lily.