

# CONNIE KALDOR

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*Celebrating  
45 years in Folk*

## Canadian Folk Icon

Saskatchewan, 1953; Connie Kaldor is born into a May blizzard that hits Regina on the heels of a heat wave. Her life has been a study in contradictions ever since, but this is a woman who weathers the changes. There's no doubt, she's prairie to the bone.

Music was a fact of life for Connie from the start. Her mother swears she sang from the cradle. She developed her range every Sunday in the local church choir, where Dad directed. Mom and Connie's twin sisters played piano, and her brothers played guitar, tuba and trumpet.

In school Connie pursued her love of performing arts with a theatre degree from the University of Alberta in 1976. She went on to work with alternative theatre companies the Mummers in Newfoundland and Theatre Passe Muraille in Toronto, but ultimately it didn't leave enough time for the music.

In 1979 she left theatre to pursue her musical career full time, setting out to blaze a trail on the Canadian folk scene (at places like the very first Canmore Folk Festival) with friend and then manager Jarol Boan. She packed her suitcase full of theatrical wisdom, threw her guitar into the back seat of an old Ford and she's been on the road ever since. Female singer songwriters were somewhat unusual in those days, but nonetheless Connie sang solo and played guitar and piano herself; and broke with tradition even further by talking and joking with her audience, breaking down the wall that often separates spectator from performer. Her seamless combination of musical skill and engaging repartée still sets her apart today.

In 1981, Connie was among the first women in Canada to launch an independent record label, now called Coyote Entertainment. She has recorded 16 albums. In 1983 she joined Fleming and Associates, a major independent acoustic music agency, and by the following year was headlining folk festivals across the country. Part of the Canadian Wave, Connie has performed alongside talents such as Stan Rogers, Ferron, Valdy, Roy Forbes and Stringband and contributed to a newly emerging and distinctly Canadian sound.

Connie was selected to perform for the last broadcast of Peter Gzowski's beloved CBC national radio program Morningside. Connie has toured extensively ever since, bringing her music all over North America and to India, China and Europe as well. She has shared the stage with innumerable artists, including Shawn Colvin, Tracy Chapman, Sylvia Tyson, the Chieftains, and Daniel Lanois. In 1984 she received a Most Promising Female Vocalist Juno nomination for her album Moonlight Grocery, and Lullaby Berceuse took home Best Children's Album in 1989, as well as the 1990 U.S. Parents Choice Award. She took Best Children's Album again in 2004 with a new book/cd format entitled A Duck in New York City. In 2000 Love is a Truck was nominated for a Juno in the Folk Roots category.

This versatile performer also penned the prairie musical 'Dust and Dreams', and has written music for both dance and theatre productions. Kaldor wrote the lyrics for Svetlana Zylinska's musical, feminist interpretation of the bible, The Destruction of Eve. The musical premiered in 1998 in Toronto with Company of Sirens. She co-wrote and performed the theme song to the animated

television show 'For Better or For Worse', which debuted on Canada's Teletoon network in 2000. In 1988, the National Film Board produced a music video for her song "Get Back the Night" as a "statement against senseless violence."

In 2002 she received the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the arts in Canada.

In 2003, Connie hosted Connie Kaldor @ Wood River Hall, a thirteen part television series showcasing Canada's finest folk and roots music performers. The title of the show is taken from what is probably Connie's best known song, Wood River, from the 1992 album of the same name. Considered by many to be the quintessential Saskatchewan tune, it was named one of the top Canadian songs by Canadian Geographic Magazine. Recorded live, the show presents a rich variety of music, from the extraordinary songs of Bruce Cockburn and Sylvia Tyson, to James Keelaghan, Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, The Duhks, the Wailin' Jennies and more.

Her 2005 c.d. Sky with Nothing to Get in the Way is full of pure prairie imagery, and seems an apt release for the year in which she sang at the Saskatchewan Centennial for Joni Mitchell as well as the Queen of England. In recognition of her contributions to Canadian culture, in 2007 Connie received the Order of Canada. That year she was also honoured with an alumni award from the University of Alberta. Connie has also recently received an Honorary Doctorate in Performance/Fine Arts from the University of Regina.

Between 2009 and 2019, she released three more albums, Postcards from the Road, Love Sask and Everyday Moments, respectively. In 2014 she received the Western Literature Association's Distinguished Achievement Award which puts her as the only songwriter amongst a list of authors such as Tony Hillerman, Cormic McCarth, Larry Mcmurtry and Thomas King. During this time, Connie was also recognized alongside k.d. lang, Ferron, Buffy Sainte-Marie and Pauline Julien as a pioneering feminist performer by the Canadian Encyclopedia. On this subject, Connie is also the subject of a chapter in the book Born a woman : Seven Canadian Women Singer-Songwriters by Ellen Schwartz and the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women selected her song, "Singer of the Sacred Heart" to create pedagogical materials for Canadian classrooms addressing the topic of domestic violence against women. Since March of 2020, she has hosted a yearly livestream concert for International Women's Day.

In 2020, Connie's song, Seed in the Ground, was selected as one of 20 songs for the Canadian Music Class Challenge in honour of the Juno Awards 50th anniversary. The song proved a fan-favourite as countless elementary schools picked Connie's song to participate in the challenge.

For decades, her music has also been frequently sung by choirs all over North America. Her most sung songs include Wood River, There Comes a Time, Come All You Women, Seed in the Ground, Canoe Song, Hymn for Pincher Creek, Margaret's Waltz, Prairie Lullaby, as well as Christmas tunes like Island Santa and Cowboy Christmas.

Following the success of her early Christmas music, Connie finally released a Christmas album in 2020 during the pandemic. At the same time, she also toured her album Everyday Moments virtually. Her livestream show, "Big Skies to Bridesmaids Dresses" was particularly well-received, "If Big Skies and Bridesmaids' Dresses is representative of the kind of online performances artists have been cooking up for us this fall, we may just survive this second wave of COVID both **BOOKING** physically AND psychologically... especially if we've got some jellied lime salad in the fridge." (Heather Kitching, Roots Music Canada).

After receiving a Creation grant from Canada Council in 2022, Connie wrote over 40 songs, from which a small selection will be selected for her latest album, set to be released in 2023.

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## Career Highlights:

- Three-time Juno Award Winner
- Member of the Order of Canada
- Recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal
- First songwriter awarded the Western Literature Association Award of Merit
- Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the University of Regina
- Distinguished alumni award from the University of Alberta

"A masterful performer, wildly funny one moment, deeply personal the next."

THE BOSTON GLOBE

Big sky. Big impact. Big laughs, too. That's Connie Kaldor in a nutshell.

THE TORONTO STAR



"Fans of acoustic music recognize Connie Kaldor as one of Canada's most accomplished and enduring singer-songwriters."

THE MIDLAND MIRROR

"One of Canada's great entertainers."

JACK SCHULLER, PRESIDENT OF FESTIVAL DISTRIBUTION

### BOOKING

[jim@flemingartists.com](mailto:jim@flemingartists.com),

Phone: 1-734-995-9066

PO Box 1568, Ann Arbor, MI 48106