



# Get to know our local artists

A Front Porch Times exclusive interview

Our neighborhood is home to many talented individuals, and one of them is **Elizabeth Doyle**. A gifted pianist, singer, and composer, Elizabeth has built a lifelong career in music that spans from intimate local performances to international stages. With stories that range from Paris concerts to conversations with Maya Angelou and Billy Joel, she brings a wealth of experience, creativity, and passion to her art. We sat down with Elizabeth to learn more about her journey, her inspirations, and what it means to be an artist in our community.



## **How did you get started in your art?**

I started playing piano at age three. My parents finally broke down and got me lessons when I was six years old. At ten years old, I started earning money through music, playing for funerals and performing in a vocal folk trio with baritone ukuleles. Music has been my main source of income my whole adult life.

## **What's a piece or performance you're most proud of and why?**

Performance highlights include touring with a musical colleague singing and playing our Cole Porter program in Paris, New York, San Francisco, Chicago and in Porter's hometown of Peru. Another memorable performing experience was going to New York to be a featured guest on Marian McPartland's NPR program "Piano Jazz." As a composer, I presented my musical, "Sleepy Hollow" at the Disney ASCAP musical theater workshop at the Disney studio in California, moderated by "Wicked" composer Stephen Schwartz. "Sleepy Hollow" has gone on to have productions in California and the Midwest. I also had a seven-piece chamber work and an art song of mine performed at an international women's music festival in Amsterdam.

## **When you're not creating, what's a hobby you enjoy that might surprise people?**

I am crazy about languages. I majored in French before I got my music degree. I played piano bar in Germany, was a foreign-exchange

student in France, jammed with musicians in Russia and am currently studying Italian on a Babel app.

## **What's the most memorable reaction you've ever had from someone who experienced your art?**

While playing and singing in a Chicago Italian restaurant, a BBC radio reporter happened to be dining near the piano. He ended up featuring my song, "Down With Winter" on a BBC radio program. I frequently had celebrities strike up conversations with me at Chicago's Pump Room. Maya Angelou and I conversed about learning languages; I sat with Christopher Plummer in Booth One and we chatted about French singer, Edith Piaf; Billy Joel and I talked about his daughter taking piano lessons.

## **What's the strangest or most unexpected place you've ever found inspiration?**

I was co-writing a musical set in New Orleans during Mardi Gras. I rented a condo in the French Quarter and took notes on the food, parades, and the music, but a visit to an above ground cemetery provided the most evocative ideas.

## **What's the biggest challenge you've faced as a local artist? How have you overcome it (if you have)?**

During the pandemic, most of my public performing events disappeared. I pivoted to vocal coaching, teaching piano and song-writing online, discovering I really loved passing along knowledge and love of music to others. I am back to performing live, but I have continued to have in-person and online students.

**Elizabeth and her husband, Paul Bjorneberg of the 5200 block of Magnolia, have lived in Lakewood-Balmoral for over 30 years.**

**You can see Elizabeth in one of her musicals being performed in Edgewater this fall. A staged reading for one night only.**

"A Coyote Solstice Tale," a one-hour family musical by Elizabeth Doyle and Don Gecewicz  
Writers Bloc New Play Festival – Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025 at 7 pm  
City Lit Theater at 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue, Chicago, IL 60606