

Irene Jalenti, no longer a Baltimore secret

By Andrew Gilbert

Born into a family of illustrious Italian musicians, Irene Jalenti has followed a singular creative path as a jazz vocalist, songwriter and arranger drawing on an international array of kindred musical currents. Possessing a strikingly rich cello-like tone, she's equally impressive improvising a scat solo or interpreting a song with soulful intensity (across five languages). While her sound is often compared to international legends like Nina Simone, Mercedes Sosa, and Beth Carvalho, her phrasing, repertoire and poetic sensibility are all her own. A creative force on Baltimore's jazz scene since 2010, Jalenti turned the pandemic-induced hiatus into artist retreat, composing and arranging a gorgeous set of material for her 2021 debut album *Dawn* featuring guest stars Sean Jones (trumpet and flugelhorn) and Warren Wolf (vibraphone).