

# Clarice Assad

*“she energetically bends music to her will and reshapes it with fascinating results.”*

– Jazz Improv Magazine

## 2026 Biography

Grammy Award-nominated composer, pianist, vocalist, and educator Clarice Assad is one of the most compelling and versatile creative voices in contemporary music. Born in Rio de Janeiro and based in Chicago, the Brazilian-American artist is celebrated for her evocative colors, rich textures, and fearless range across classical, world, jazz, and pop idioms.

In February 2026, the American Academy of Arts and Letters awarded Assad the **Andrew Imbrie Award in Music**, recognizing a mid-career composer of demonstrated artistic merit. The previous year, she was named a recipient of the **2025 Meier Achievement Award** by the Helen Coburn Meier and Tim Meier Charitable Foundation for the Arts, which honors Chicago-area artists who push the artistic envelope for their talent, persistence, and community involvement. That same month, she delivered the **Kageyama-Hunt Global Speaker Series** address at Belmont Hill School—a distinguished lecture series dedicated to global citizenship—speaking on the transformative power of music and creative life. In March 2026, her new string quartet work *NEXUS* received its New York premiere at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall, performed by the Takács Quartet. Praised by the *New York Classical Review* and featured in *The Strad* under the headline “Let’s Clarice It Up,” the work guides four players through a dramatic arc of individuality, collision, and dissolution—asking, through music and choreography, what it truly means to play as one.

With more than 130 works to her credit, Assad has received commissions from Carnegie Hall, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the LA Philharmonic, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and many others. Her music has been recorded by cellist Yo-Yo Ma, percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie, and violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and released on Cedille Records, SONY Masterworks, and Nonesuch. She is currently composer-in-residence with the Allentown Symphony and recently concluded a residency with the University of Maryland, and has previously served in residence for the Albany Symphony, the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, and the New Century Chamber Orchestra.

As a performer, she has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and Le Casino de Paris, sharing stages with Bobby McFerrin, Paquito D’Rivera, and Anat Cohen. Through her VOXploration education series—presented worldwide and supported by New Music USA

and the McKnight Foundation—she brings music creation and improvisation to participants of all ages and backgrounds.

Assad holds a Bachelor of Music from Roosevelt University in Chicago and a Master of Music from the University of Michigan, and is the recipient of the Aaron Copland Award and multiple ASCAP composition awards.