

BIOGRAPHY

Valerie Leonhart Smalkin

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Co-President: **The Children's Music Network**

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Maryland State Arts Council Award Winner

Parents' Choice Recommended *Love Bug!* Cd

Ventriloquist, musician, composer, and performer Valerie Leonhart Smalkin was one of the writers, performers, and co-producers as well as the head puppeteer of the Emmy award winning television program *It's Kindertime* on Baltimore's ABC affiliate WMAR-TV 2. Val's CD, *A Gentle Halloween*, received a Parents' Choice Fun Stuff award in 2015, and in 2016 her follow-up CD, *Sing! Sing! Sing!...and Dance!*, garnered a Parents' Choice Approved award. Her current CD, *Love Bug!* received a Parents' Choice Recommended award.

Her book *Springtime Dance* took gold in the Moonbeam Children's Book Awards in 2014. As a recipient of a Maryland State Arts Council grant for solo non-classical performance in 2015, and for solo theatre performance in 2016 and 2019, Val continues to perform and compose music designed for the 2 to 10-year-old set. As a ventriloquist, Val performs for family and educational events in Maryland, Washington DC, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York City, California, Cap d'Antibes, France, and Brussels, Belgium. As a jazz chanteuse Val performs with the occasional puppet and the Silverback Jazz Quintet in Baltimore, Maryland.

Since 2017 Val has been the Co-President of The **Children's Music Network** made up of 400+ performers, teachers, librarians, music therapists, parents, and children from around the world who celebrate the positive power of music in the lives of children by sharing songs, exchanging ideas and creating community. She is also the Maryland Governor of the **Indie Collaborative**, a networking association for industry musicians and professionals.