

WOMEN IN JAZZ MEDIA

THE MAGAZINE

CHINA MOSES



China Moses
Devon Gates
Diana Torti
Enid Farber
Filomena Campus
Germana Stella La Sorsa
Georgia Mancio
Hannah Horton
Isabel Marquez
J Steps
Kim Cypher
Lydia Liebman
Macha Gharibian
Monika S Jakubowska
Paulette Jackson
Poppy Daniels
Rosa Brunello
Tatiana Gorilovsky
Tatiana Tate



International
Women's Day

MARCH
2025

and so much more!

COVER PHOTO: CHINA MOSES BY ALEXANDRE LACOMBE

MARCH 2025 MAGAZINE TEAM

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Dr Bradley Stone

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Patricia Brennan

Marina Alberio

Janel Leppin

Sahara von Hattenberger

Welcome to the latest edition of our Women in Jazz Media magazine.

The theme for this year's International Women's Day is 'Accelerate Action' and this edition is full of inspirational women who are changing the landscape and helping us move to a space of equality, respect and value. Throughout the world, this day brings people together and shines a light on women across the globe and allows a platform to explore the many issues women are facing. But as Gloria Steinem said 'The story of women's struggle for equality belongs to no single feminist, nor to any one organization but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights.'

Women in Jazz Media is an organisation with 28 incredible women, trying to make the jazz world a better place. A fairer place. A safe place. We are grateful for everyone's support in our work and we cannot achieve anything alone. Please enjoy exploring the work of the incredible women in this edition and share, support and embrace the power of community.

Fiona Ross, Founder

International
Women's Day

CHINA MOSES



Photo by Alexandre Lacombe



CHINA MOSES

SINGING, SAVOURING AND DEFENDING ARTISTIC FREEDOM

At the beginning of the year China Moses announced ‘2025 I am gonna be singing, savoring and defending artistic freedom.’ Here we are a few months later, and as we all know (and if you don’t, you should), China is fiercely true to her word and shining her light just when we need it. Although to be clear, China is and always has brought light to the world in whatever she does, and it is a light that is meticulously crafted while at the same time beautifully naked, raw and true.

Her voice, her artistry, her humanity are important. She changes lives. She empowers. She mentioned to me that she can be an ‘acquired taste’, but to my mind, it is a taste that everyone needs to acquire - the world would genuinely be a better place. China Moses is an artist who fills you with joy. Whether you are watching her perform, listening to her radio shows or reading her social media posts, China Moses makes you feel that anything and everything is not only possible, but deserved and welcomed with open arms.

Fear of consequence is something that holds many of us back, especially women. We see bad behaviour. We experience bad behaviour, but the fear of reputational damage is real. There are countless women who have and continue to be ‘black listed’ for speaking out and are no longer booked for gigs and more. But when we see an artist speak their truth, publicly, the impact of this is significant. It empowers and strengthens the community. It brings light

to a dark situation. China Moses recently spoke out, very publicly, about not being paid for some work.

‘If speaking up costs me future opportunities, I accept that. What matters more is exposing these harmful industry practices. I’ve made this public because silence only perpetuates these problems.’

The community surrounded her with love, support and celebration. Other people came forward, inspired by the safety China had provided. China did something women before her felt they were never able to do and years from now, when we look through the history books at trailblazers and pioneers, China will be there.

China’s upcoming album ‘It’s Complicated’ is a masterpiece. Eight tracks full of the multiple layers of life - China’s life, our lives - China connects with us all and this is one of her many superpowers, the ability to share her truth with the audience.

‘I can’t feel anything, my heart is broken’ a line from ‘broken (pour Alberte)’ is sung with a depth of emotion that will blow your mind. Every line she sings will reach deep into your heart, mind and soul. Allowing yourself the space to open up and share that level of vulnerability is powerful and where some artists struggle and feel uncomfortable in this space, China not only embraces it, she transcends in it.

It’s intentional.

Photo by Ward Roberts



How do I stay in the mystical magic of this thing called music?
Performance.

and it is a craft. We all learn to deal with it differently.

China has been surrounded by artistic excellence her whole life. The daughter of two legends - activist, theatre, television and film actor and director Gilbert Moses III and Grammy and Tony Award-winning producer, vocalist and pioneer Dee Dee Bridgewater, China is a trailblazer born from trailblazers. A visionary birthed from visionaries. Having worked in the industry for many years, China knows not only who she is, and but why she is.

I've dealt with being observed by, and picked apart by other humans my whole life. So now that I've been doing this professionally for 30 years, I'm comfortable with laying it out - what's the worst that can happen? Somebody doesn't like it and they leave? That's literally the worst thing that can happen. The other worst thing that can happen is for me to keep it all bottled up. So, since those are the two extremes, I have no problem risking my chance in front of other people. I have faith. When you lay it out like that, I'll take that risk and that's a small risk. It's a special energy and a special magic.

Many artists are scared of those risks and the fear of consequence, but China not only embraces those risks, she emboldens herself and others through her risk taking - and not just in her music. That level of assured fearlessness instils strength in all those around her.

I think it also has a lot to do with accepting humans. Other humans are just going to be who they're going to be. I'm not surprised when somebody does something good or something bad and that same person can do it on two different days or in the same day. I'm not surprised about it as much as I used to be. I think that's directly linked to how I perform. That's just how I was born. I don't question it, but I also know my limits. I know what spaces I can fully feel comfortable in and what spaces I don't. I know what jobs I can do and what I'm willing to try.

Totally intentional. I profoundly believe that if I don't open myself up as an artist, then there's no way that somebody standing in the audience is going to be able to fully receive. I'm not here, in my art and in my time on this earth, to serve the artistic process and the power of music in a way it doesn't also help me. So, for it to help me, I have to be exactly who I am - the good, bad and the ugly. And I share that a lot on the stage. It is therapeutic and as simplistic as it sounds, music is a form of therapy for me. If I did not have music, I would not be here. I would have checked out a long time ago. The power of music to bring us together as humans... that experience of sharing on stage. I only make albums to be able to perform. I don't enjoy the recording process. I mean, it's fun, but it's not what I live for. I like the live connection; I like the human connection of music and that's what keeps me doing it.

I profoundly know that what I'm feeling, millions of other people have felt, and it is the artist's role to be able to translate those emotions and be able to make pieces of art that can help everybody express that. That's what art is for, for me. I try to respect that. I have always been comfortable being very straightforward and not hiding behind my natural joyfulness, which is totally natural for me, I like to smile, it's just how I am. I enjoy smiling, I like laughing, I like seeing the best in people. I also just like accepting humans as they are because I wish for the world to accept me as I am. And it's never uncomfortable. I do have to deal with resurfacing emotions constantly, that's the most difficult part, but that's something that the audience doesn't have to deal with. I have had to learn to deal with that because performing is my job. It's not happenstance that I'm on stage. Somebody invited me, provided a budget for me to bring my musicians. It's not 'oops,' we are there. How I have learned to deal with things has taken a lot of therapy, a lot of conversations with other artists and being comfortable in this talent that I have to perform. I learnt my craft by studying other great performers



I just did a wonderful improvised show with Tyshawn Sorey & King Britt in France for the Blacktronika movement and it was incredible. It was absolutely incredible. Had I ever done a fully improvised show? No but it was a lot of fun. I had to rethink what improvisation means for me and for the musical language I have within myself and I had to trust that. Nobody booed me off the stage. The musicians still like me. They followed me on socials. Because that is the thing: nobody's going to boo you off the stage unless you're really, really bad. In the world that we live in, a world of more and more acceptance and understanding of other people, you have to be a really bad performer or say something really hyper offensive to get booed off the stage.

Me not accepting the fact that I have a gift that was bestowed upon me, to define me by my 'powers' from the universe and whatever mixture that happened in my DNA, in my upbringing and my nurturing and in my culture, multiple cultures...whatever the mixture that has brought me to be who I am, I have to just accept it. Not run away from it. I do it to the best of my ability and the questions I've started asking myself are - How do I get better? How do I do better? How can I respect it? How can I open doors for others? How can I make sure those doors stay open? How do I stay in the joy? How do I stay in the mystical magic of this thing called music?

Performance.

China's upcoming album It's Complicated is a masterclass. Multi layers of styles, themes, grooves, emotions and brilliance. The line up is inspired. Surrounded by artists that are not only at the top of their game, but artists that understand the beauty and power of China Moses. It's Complicated demonstrates the mastery of her songwriting and hits you on so many levels.

Everything that Black Americans have had their hands in, is in this album. You have deep, porch Mississippi blues energy and at the same time you have fusion, jazz and

a kind of hip hopian essence. It is also Marvin Gaye-inspired. Every single song is like a mash up, a beautiful mixture of what my influences are and what my heritage is, and my heritage is complicated. It's constantly being put into question - being a black American, what does it mean? Are we a tribe or are we a culture? There's a whole conversation about that over here in the States. You have African American descendants of slaves; there's a terminology for it and in the United States, you put terms on everything, which is helpful and then at the same time totally not helpful - it's complicated! Growing up as black American within France or living in London, being friends with people who know they are Nigerian or they know they're Jamaican, I'm American, what does that mean? I'm black American. What does that mean? What does it mean reclaiming the importance of my tribe? What does it mean to actually start calling it something like a tribe or community or heritage?

But the debate is, is my culture any less? And what part of my culture is of course is from my ancestors, who were enslaved people brought by force to another continent, but also transformed and made the melting pot of all of these different tribes and heritages that has become what black Americans are today - and what does that mean? And what it was like for me growing up in a predominantly white society and coming back to the States and hanging out with black Americans, knowing that I have holes, that I'm missing of my own culture. All these conversations. So, it's a lot, and after a while you try to explain it by word, but

I just do it by music.

We all are holes of so many fractured pieces of history. It's the nurturing versus the nature and the culture of where you landed, and also what your inner personality is and how you can integrate the outside world into your personality. How your sensibilities understand the outside world and transform that information. It all filters into the music. I'm also very

careful with what I say and how I word things when I talk about my culture. I evolve within the jazz realm. But what I do is not considered jazz, and it shouldn't be considered jazz. It's jazz inspired. I am a child of jazz. It is my heritage. It is the music of my culture. But am I a jazz artist? I will leave that for other people to go and debate. What I know is that I appreciate a lot of different artists, different cities and cultures and I understand the atrocities of what these different cultures did to each other. And I understand. I understand more about the United States now that I have lived in the UK.

Not letting the weight of the past hold you down has been the hardest thing I've had to try to teach myself. Not saying that I manage it every single time.

In the second part of this interview, coming out in our next magazine, we will explore China's writing process and the beauty and humanity behind songs, but to end the first of these articles, I want to go to the end of China's album.

'I know deep down inside that although I don't feel like it's going to get better, I know it's going to get better'

The weight of this lyric has stayed with me.

I profoundly don't feel that it's going to get better, but if you give up hope, you give up life. If you don't believe that it is possible to move forward, even a small step forward, that's just giving up. And I don't give up easily. I can take steps back and re-route. I can rethink. But I'm not going to give up hope that things are getting better. I'm not going to give up hope that there are more and more women in media, in jazz media, in the jazz realm. Are we there yet? No. Are there incredible organisations doing something incredible? Yes. What you've been doing or Alicia Keys with She is the Music, things that my Mom and my sister have done...things Terri Lyne Carrington is doing. Am I going to ignore that and just sit and be like things ain't advancing?

Come on.





Photo by Leslie Farinacci

LYDIA LIEBMAN

Lydia Liebman is leading the way in excellence in PR. As the founder and president of Lydia Liebman Promotions, she has a staggeringly impressive portfolio of work with countless Grammy nominations and wins for her clients, and a roster recently including Brandee Younger, Samara Joy and Lakecia Benjamin. To say Lydia Liebman is on fire, is an understatement.

PR often gets a bad name. Sometimes due to the lack of understanding about what PR actually is, and sometimes due to some fairly unscrupulous people out there promising impossible press for artists for significant fees. There is also a new trend of press releases and emails being created and sent out to journalists with a little too much support from AI thereby losing that personal connectivity that is essential in establishing meaningful and professional relationships.

Featured in the renowned Forbes under 30 list, and a rare jazz entry, Lydia Liebman consistently demonstrates the true art behind not just effective PR, but inspired jazz media and the importance of sharing great music. It was wonderful to talk to Lydia about her career, and with so much to explore, this is the first of a two-part interview.

As the daughter of jazz legend Dave Liebman and musician educator, Caris Visentin Liebman, Lydia has been surrounded by great music all her life. Initially training as a vocalist and pianist, it was when it was time for Lydia to start college, that she reflected on her future, searching for her calling. After one semester of Music and Political Communications at Emerson College, it was clear to Lydia that this route was not for her and media began calling, and

she moved over to the Producing for Film, Television and Radio programme. It was here that she began to combine her musical training and passion for jazz into something very exciting.

Emerson has a really vibrant radio programme, one of the top-rated college radio stations and I got involved in that right away. I had a jazz radio programme and guests on the show included Gregory Porter, Kurt Elling and Pat Metheny...Chick Corea...it was incredibly serious! And I really loved it. I had a great time and did this show for four years, eventually becoming the general manager of the radio station.

I had a lot of friends and musicians that I met at Berklee, (including the guy who's now my husband) and they all had gigs. I would ask - how did you promote this? They would say 'we don't know'. I thought, well I don't know either, but I can find out. So, I taught myself how to use Photoshop in a weekend, how to make flyers and so on. And then I basically just started promoting concerts, just guerrilla marketing style - walked 10 miles around Boston, putting flyers up at all these places. And that's literally how I got started. I started with my friends, letting them kind of be my test kitchen. I had no intention of becoming a publicist. I had no intention of going into college to do this. I literally just got involved in extracurriculars and learnt about business and just by osmosis learned how to do stuff, and was paid - money! - for the first time promoting a gig in October 2011 and then it went from there. Before I knew it, I looked around and realised I was actually making money

doing this. That's how it started and so it was really radio that put me there.

With Lydia's drive for learning new skills and the joy she found in her work, her career very quickly and organically evolved, despite having no formal training in being a publicist. She said yes to almost everything and developed her skills on the job while studying at college, with the heritage of her upbringing in her mind.

I like to see people succeed and being a musician is really hard. I grew up in the business and I've seen first-hand what it's like. My Dad, as successful as he is, as legendary as he is, didn't have a manager until he was in his 70s. The first publicist he hired, in my lifetime, was when he got the NEA Jazz Masters award, back in 2011. I genuinely grew up around this. For me to get people to come to my friends' concerts and to get someone to write something nice about them, it was so exciting. My friends were excited, then I'd be excited and we'd all just be excited about it. I was just so happy about getting people to notice.

I didn't really think about it as a real career until I moved to New York. I did college the right way - I had good grades; I did all the extracurriculars and my resume looked super amazing. I had interned at Sirius Radio and with Ted Curling and I had a lot of experience. But when I moved to New York, graduated and I tried for all these jobs, I got very little back. It's super, super, super, super competitive. I just thought, ok, I'm just going to keep applying for jobs and while doing that, I'll keep promoting gigs and promoting albums. Then I received a check for \$750.

Founding her own company Lydia Liebman Promotions in 2011, Lydia's company very quickly became the go to PR company. Having garnered nearly 50 GRAMMY nominations and a dozen wins, her portfolio will blow your mind. Her achievements are significant, built on drive, expertise, passion, hard work and her love for contributing to

the growth and resilience of the jazz scene. I asked Lydia how her roster and reputation grew so quickly.

I have never lobbied for a client. I have never gone up to an artist and said 'hire me, I've just never done that - not my vibe. It really is word of mouth. One thing, I will say, that was beneficial, because my dad was who he is, there was a little bit of an implicit trust with some people. People thought 'well, she must know something because she's his daughter'. But that nepotism only goes so far, you still must develop. And in fact, the pressure is sometimes even more, but it did help. But it was word of mouth. It was the musicians. The thing about jazz, is everyone plays together, so you work on one person's album, it goes well and then the bass player on that record has their own project, you do that. And then, the label he's on has another project, and that's kind of how it happens. Chain of events. Before you know it, you get really busy.

With over 700 new releases campaigns so far, and countless campaigns for venues such as Carnegie Hall and The Kennedy Center, I wondered how Lydia stays so incredibly organised, focussed and energised.

We work about 100 albums a year along with supporting other organisations like the DC Jazz Festival and Birdland Jazz Club and so it's very busy and very intense. I organise my life by release date. I do have other things that I help to promote but generally, it's all arranged by project and that helps me stay organised. It's an ongoing process, but yes, it's a lot! I'm really intentional in the work that I'm saying yes to, and I know that when I am taking a client, I am confident that I can pitch it and they're probably going to say yes. I have a small team which is also challenging because everything does have to come through me. That also includes all the other parts of the job, like invoicing and posting on the website and

Photo by Leslie Farinacci



doing social media and screening. All the inquiries that come in, it sometimes takes me months to get back to people because it's impossible for me to answer everything. So, it is hard, yes, but I'm grateful that I do have a good team and freelancers that I work with.

Of course, one of the wonderful things about the successful campaigns you have had is that more people want to work with you. But that also means more emails and more screening. What is your process for deciding who you work with?

Well, first and foremost, a lot of it comes down to logistics, which is the unsexy answer. I book out six to eight, sometimes 10 months in advance and I have work on the schedule for 2026 already. So, there's that, there's the timing, the setup time needed to do the campaign and that's a big thing. Then it also comes down to more of the details - is there a label? Is there a tour? What's the personnel like? There are projects that could be perfect that I just adore and maybe I love, but they're not touring. Or maybe they are super new with unknown musicians on the project or maybe it's an indie release. And I know, no matter how good this is, it will be an uphill battle and that maybe they should invest their money into something else and not PR. But what it comes down to is, I have to first of all connect with the project. I have to like it. I don't have to love it. You can't love everything, but I want to at least feel that I like it enough. Or at least respect the project. Sometimes things will come across my desk that maybe I don't love where it is going musically, but I can see where they're coming from and I know people that will like it. You have to put yourself in the head of whoever it is that you're pitching to. At least that's what I do!

Unlike many areas of the jazz industry, PR does not seem to be hugely male dominated and there are quite a few women working in PR, however, I imagine most of the people you are pitching to are not women. I have also witnessed a few conversations where

the older generation have raised concerns about young journalists, questioning their knowledge and experience of jazz, purely based on their age. You have been in the industry for many years, but you are still young so how has your experience been?

I've thought about this a lot. In some ways being young is great because you're young and fresh. People think the younger generation are more in tune with what's happening and so in some ways that's helpful. But the amount of misogyny, sexism and ageism that I have dealt with... I would say the negatives absolutely outweigh the positives. When I was younger, there was a lot that I didn't even realise was happening until later on. But now, there's no doubt. I've definitely had my share, not so much from other publicists, although other publicists that are men, labels, managers and yes it is mostly men I am dealing with, and it can be a real challenge. I've had some really messed up things that people have said to me. I found other publicists make insinuations like 'she's only getting that because she's a woman'. I mean, really messed up stuff. I wouldn't say it's a barrier, but I would just say that as women, no matter what you're doing, you are definitely judged. Something else that comes up a lot, is when I have female clients. I had a journalist contact me and say 'wow, such a great album. You know, you should do away with the leggy photo because she doesn't need that because it takes away from the package'. I wrote him back and said it stuns me how male journalists feel the need to comment on women's bodies unsolicited - what is wrong with you? He wrote me back and he apologised.

Sadly, this happens all the time, behind the scenes and although increasingly people are speaking out, almost on a daily basis, I will speak to a woman who has been disrespected or treated unprofessionally and inappropriately. But the fear of consequence is real. The fear of reputational damage is real. But knowing that people like Lydia are challenging this behaviour, is important

to know. It is the action needed to enable change.

I do challenge behaviours now because I don't think it's right to let that slide. It's all relative though. If someone from the New York Times wrote to me like that, I'm probably going to be a little bit more measured in my response but I'm still going to say something. I will say that I'm very grateful to have gotten to the point now, where I do feel confident in speaking out. Five years ago, you wouldn't catch me making a response because I would be nervous about alienating someone or saying something wrong.

I don't fault people for not speaking out because it's really hard to speak out and I understand that, and I respect that. I know there are absolutely deals that I have been passed up on because of things that I have said, but I'm lucky because I can let those things go. If it's not meant to be, it's fine. I've had consequences for speaking out, but I don't care. You know, it's just wrong and I don't like that. How dare you say this about my client? Would you say about a male client? Why are his arms out in the photo? No one says that about men.

Lydia's work in supporting the jazz scene is significant, not just in sharing great music with the world but in ensuring respect for the art form.

Music and the arts have always been a bastion of hope. During difficult times music has always been a force that gets people through, and I know it's corny, but it's true. Historically, music has always been a force for good. It's always been something that's inspired people. I think that it's important to just remember the role that the arts and music have. Music is not going to go anywhere. People will always need it, and it will always fire people.

Part two of this interview will be shared in our next magazine but in the meantime, here are some of the latest and upcoming releases by inspirational artists that Lydia has shared with us:



Pianist Caili O'Doherty revisits and honours the genius of Lil Hardin Armstrong with *Bluer Than Blue*. Released March 7th.

Bluer Than Blue is more than a retelling of jazz history; it's more than a love letter to the music of a late genius; and it's more than a masterwork of informed arranging. At its core, *Bluer Than Blue* is a profound monument to an unsung hero that captures not only the spirit of the music but the ebullient character of the composer herself.





KAISA MENSIVU

Finnish bassist and composer Kaisa Mäensivu 'Moving Parts', the third album by Kaisa's Machine.

Releasing March 14th.

Kaisa's Machine, the quintet led by Finnish bassist and composer Kaisa Mäensivu, is already a powerhouse lauded as a "band of young aces" (New York Times) and "refreshingly inventive" (All About Jazz) with two prior albums - In the Key of K (2017) and Taking Shape (2023) - under their belt. Now, Kaisa's Machine seeks to expand their horizons as the bandleader reflects, using a breadth of emotion and compositional tools, upon the nature of home as she ponders the reality of being divided equally between the dramatically different cities of Helsinki and New York. Moving Parts, the third album by Kaisa's Machine releasing March 14th, 2025, represents these two cities with varying soundscapes and moods as Mäensivu explores the ever-salient topic of what it means to belong.

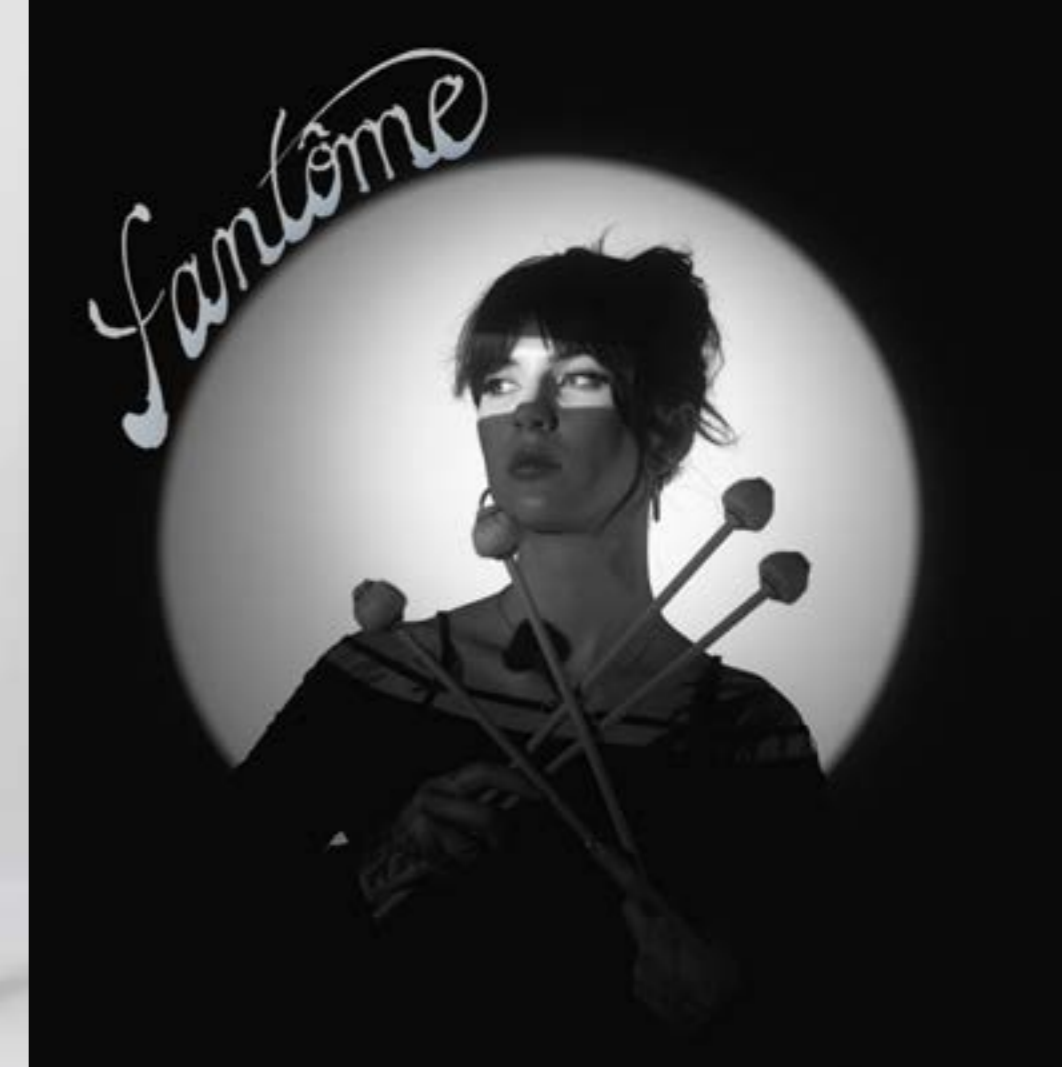


THE EMPRESS

'Square One' is the debut release from a new all-female saxophone quartet The Empress.

Releasing March 21st

The project, spearheaded by award-winning jazz artist Pureum Jin breathes new life into classic jazz standards while making a powerful statement about representation and artistry in the jazz world. Along with Jin, The Empress comprises two-time Grammy Award-winning baritone saxophonist Lauren Sevian (also the album's production advisor), internationally acclaimed alto saxophonist Erena Terakubo, and versatile tenor saxophonist Chelsea Baratz.



SASHA BERLINER

Following on the heels of her acclaimed albums Azalea (2019) and Onyx (2022), Sasha Berliner presents 'Fantome', a salient statement that cries to take the music for what it is and to leave the brute force of categorizing jazz music behind.

Releasing March 28th.

Internationally acclaimed saxophonist and woodwindist Sharel Cassity's new release, Gratitude, shares with audiences and listeners a conversation of joy, hope, and celebration.

Part two of this interview will be shared in our next magazine!

Visit Lydia Liebman Promotions website [by clicking here](#)

PHOTO BY MONIKA S
JAKUBOWSKA

POPPY DANIELS



POPPY DANIELS

FROM BAND MEMBER TO BAND LEADER

BY ISABEL MARQUEZ

The up and coming UK based trumpeter Poppy Daniels is making a mark on the London scene and is set to release her debut this year. From jamming in New York jazz clubs to playing in the world's biggest venues alongside some sensational names, Daniels is now ready to discover her own voice within the noise. With the release of Chet Baker Re:imagined under Decca Records coming up, as well as Poppy's own project under Jazz re:refreshed, I was keen to chat to her to learn more about making the transition from band member to band leader.

What has the build up to the release of Chet Baker Re:imagined been like? How did you get involved in this project?

It's a crazy story! They initially had all the artists planned out and all the tracks already recorded. I was playing trumpet at the time for Jordan Rakei who is signed to Decca Records, and someone from the label saw us play at the Royal Albert Hall, who said she enjoyed my contribution to the show. Someone had dropped out of the Chet Baker album and they thought I would be fitting as another instrumentalist on the album.

I was super excited, Chet Baker is my hero! However, it was a quick turnaround. I only had a month to pick, rearrange, re-

cord, mix and send off my song. I was also touring within this month, which gave me even less time! Low and behold, we got the days booked in and with the best team and band, managed to do it. It was an intense month. I am very happy with the product, I think it shows my particular voice and I got to do one of my favourite Chet Baker songs (I've Never Been in Love Before). It is lullaby-like in nature, similar to how I like to write in my own music. I call it a 'Heart-string Moment', when the harmonies and melodies all come together to pull at your emotions.

This year you are transitioning into more of a band leader and launching your own career. What has this process been like for you?

I've always been someone who shies away on stage. You can see it in the performances; I play very loud, but when I get on the microphone, I'm more subdued. I wouldn't be taking this step or be where I am now without session work and the collaboration with other artists. Through this work I have gained incredible insight into how other people present themselves on stage, and even with a sense of shyness they can still put on a good show without changing who they are. This launch of my own music has been a long time coming. I wouldn't have been able to do this without Alley Lloyd, who is my



Have you ever felt at any point in your career underrepresented or under appreciated as a female trumpeter?

My dad plays trombone and taught me to play trumpet. He would take me to regular big band rehearsals, which were mostly men. I'm used to the male dominated scene, as that is what I grew up with and was welcomed into.

At university there were instances where the male trumpeters would often get booked before the women. This pushed me to make opportunities for myself.

There was a situation where I was playing and touring with a pop musician. I was let go half way through the tour without warning, or any recompensation. They didn't help me pay for my flights back home and cut me off without any pay; I couldn't pay rent. I wasn't given a contract prior to the tour and had to get one off the Musicians Union. I felt like it was taboo to talk about it to other people and felt very isolated in my experience. Then other women began to come forward with similar scenarios.

This was definitely a dark time, but it was also a learning curve. Now, whenever I am given work, I ensure that I sign a contract.

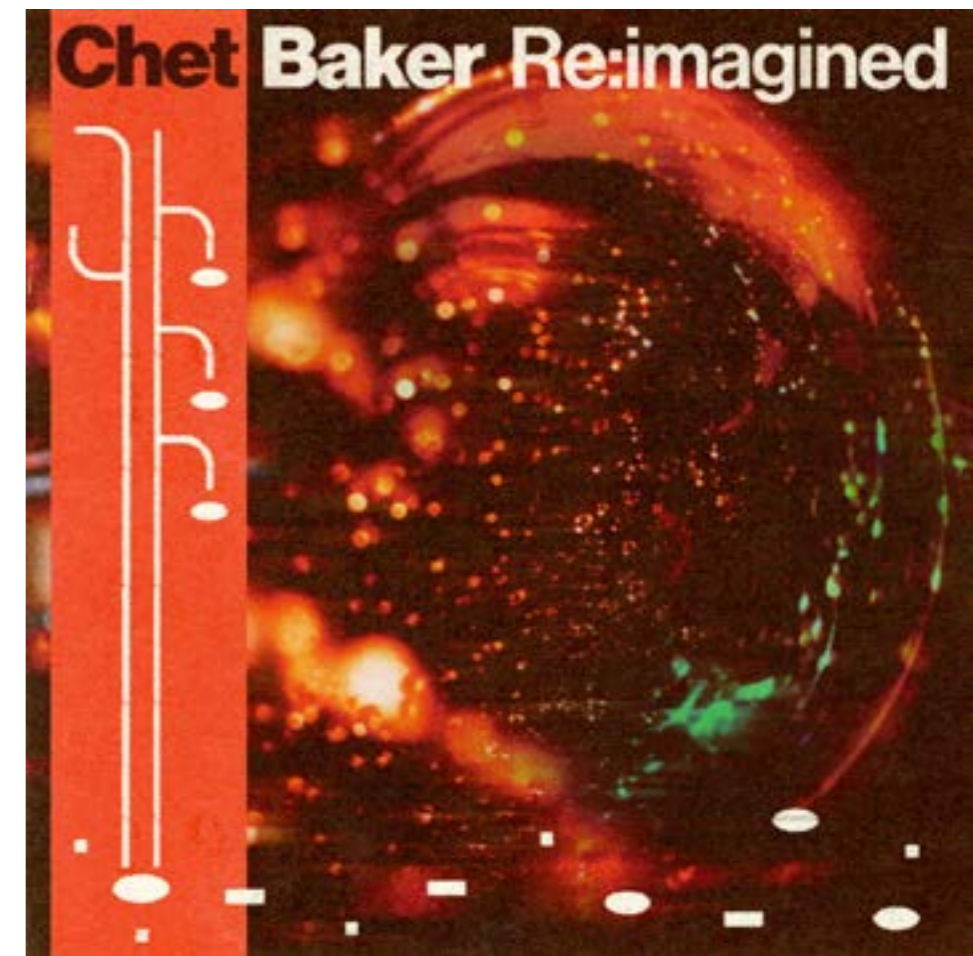
What are you most looking forward to in 2025?

I am very excited for Love Supreme and the Cheltenham Jazz Festival. It feels like a milestone to be booked under my own name. My debut EP is coming out in April, with a single out in March, as well as the Chet Baker album. This is going to be an incredible year!

Chet Baker Re:imagined is released on Decca on May 9 2025. Poppy performs at the Cheltenham Jazz Festival on Sunday May 4 and the Love Supreme Jazz Festival on Saturday July 5.

[Follow Poppy Daniels' journey here](#)

[Click on the album cover above to purchase the album.](#)



best friend. She knows exactly how I want to express myself and I can only be a leader knowing she is around. With the writing process, I bring ideas to the band and a lot of the time I work with my keyboard player Eddie Lee, who helps in developing my ideas.

You've played and worked in various cities around the world. How did the jazz scene differ between them?

With Leeds, I didn't play a lot of jazz before I went to university there. I rejected the course for the first year as everyone around me seemed so advanced and I felt insecure with the level I was at. But by the end of second year, I became closer with my peers and felt like I could open up a lot more, make mistakes and feel okay with it. The support I got from the musicians around me, I carried through to London. I've just surrounded myself with musicians that lift me up.

When you graduate University they don't

teach you how to make your way in the industry. I was a barista for a year and I didn't play the trumpet once. I decided to get back into playing by going to New York and taking my trumpet with me. I needed to build up my confidence again to make it in London.

In New York, I would sleep all day and go out in the evenings to jam sessions that would start at midnight. I met so many new people. Through doing this, someone asked me to dep for him at a lecture, and similar opportunities continued to pop up. He got me into lectures at the New School, playing with lots of different people. From this, I ended up playing at Candido Camero's 91st birthday, which was insane. I then began playing in Barry Harris's Big Band every Sunday. Playing with these legends taught me a lot more than just studying them. Overall, I spent 3 months in New York in 2019. This really gave me the confidence to come back to London and put myself out there.

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a long white lace dress, stands in profile holding a double bass. She is positioned in front of a large, dark, triangular structure that appears to be part of a building or a stage set. The structure has a grid of rivets or bolts. The background is a clear blue sky. The overall mood is artistic and dramatic.

DEVON GATES

Photo by Francseco Garguilli

DEVON GATES: WATER DANCERS

BY ISABEL MARQUEZ

Just a year ago, I was enjoying the sights and music of New York, and in the process, got to the wonderful Devon Gates. Devon Gates is a bassist, vocalist and composer from Atlanta, Georgia, now based in Brooklyn, NY. After studying anthropology and jazz performance at Harvard University and Berklee College of Music, she has worked with artists including Terri Lyne Carrington, Vijay Iyer, Jen Shyu, Fay Victor, Nicole Mitchell, Susie Ibarra, and Sara Serpa, performing across the US and on the international stage.

Performing works for the first time in the UK from her newest project, “Water Dancers” and fresh from a New York premiere at The Jazz Gallery in December, she explores colours, sounds, and textures inspired by the elements of water and air, the blues, and the question: what might it mean to dance in rhythm with the ever-changing movement of the tides of life? Her original compositions and arrangements are paired with a blend of traditional and unconventional instrumentations, with a quintet of friends she met studying abroad at the Royal Academy of Music: Hoda Jahanpour (cello), Casey Whyte (violin), Gates on bass and voice, Scottie Thompson (piano), and Ananda Brandão (drums). This show will be taking place as part of Women in Jazz Media’s regular residencies at Karamel Club. We can’t wait to welcome Devon to the UK, and hope to see a lot of you there!

Since we met last year in New York, what have you been getting up to?

Since we met in New York in March of last year, a lot has happened! I’ve been going between Boston and NYC while pursuing a master’s degree through Berklee College of Music’s Global Jazz Institute, I’ve had the honor of playing with musicians I deeply admire like Vijay Iyer, Terri Lyne Carrington, Sara Serpa, and more, I’m getting close to finishing the writing process for my debut album, I’ve gotten to travel and play music with friends in Panama and India...definitely a lot of growing and developing as an artist, and as a person, finding my voice and building community at this stage in my life (I just turned 24 in February!). What feels important to me right now, is finding ways of using music as a connective force, as a way to organize people and imagine more loving, caring ways of being with each other, even if it’s just getting folks into a room together for a rehearsal, play, or gig who might not know each other before, or are from different parts of the music or arts community...these little moments of connection I believe are underestimated in their potential to change how people see themselves, and their relationship to others, in big ways. If any one person comes away from chatting or playing with me feeling just a little more hopeful than they did beforehand, that’s everything to me, and so that pursuit is what’s inspiring me to get up in the morning these days.

How would you describe the jazz scene right now in New York?





The jazz scene in New York is really multi-faceted; a lot like London, I would say, in its massiveness and the way you can find folks playing a little bit of everything, inspired by so many wide-ranging influences, all coexisting and finding their own pockets and spaces. There are a lot of efforts I've been feeling inspired by to raise social consciousness in the community as well, like a fundraising concert for the Middle Eastern Children's Alliance I was part of recently, organized by an amazing bassist and organizer Or Bareket. I see this as a continuation of the legacy of jazz music as a force for social change, from slavery to the US Civil Rights Movement, to right now. Seeing so many musicians, from Immanuel Wilkins to Jaleel Shaw to Vitor Gonçalves come together for a good cause, really reinforces the interdependency of any jazz community, whether in London or NY or anywhere – we cannot exist in a vacuum, and have both the responsibility and the opportunity to really try to take care of each other, in whatever form that may take.

What are your connections with London? And what was your experience playing here like?

I had barely been to London before I decided to study abroad at the Royal Academy for a fall term in my final year of undergraduate studies at Harvard, and to be honest I was surprised at how different it felt from the US, and from the “New England” I was familiar with in Boston (as I'm sure you could agree, thinking about your experiences spending time in the States!) It was never a dull moment, learning the dry, witty humour, the “language barrier” (crochets, semi-quavers...), trying beans for breakfast and mince pies, and exploring all the different little universes the city holds, from Tomorrow's Warriors, Coven Jazz Nights, to Saturday afternoons with Julian Joseph, Jazz ReFreshed, little neighborhood pubs, and the energy of the London Jazz Festival. Of course, it's cliché, but my favorite part of spending time there was the people I met who so graciously made me feel welcome and part of things here, even visiting for a short time. I miss them dearly, and I'm so

excited to come back, even if just for a few days this time!

Can you tell us about your upcoming show at the Karamel and why you have chosen this line up?

I am very excited for this show at Karamel because it features a new set of music that I started writing actually for my coursework at RAM, and I feel it is influenced by the sounds I was introduced to here, Norma Winstone, Azimuth, ECM...but at the same time, with a strong sense of groove and soul and my own influences, from the musical Rent to Scott LaFaro and my experiences studying with Danilo Pérez at Berklee. This lineup specifically are all folks that I got the chance to get to know and to play with last time I was in London, and I really admire the sensitivity and fluidity that each of them brings to any musical situation – the project is called “Water Dancers” and I wanted to create a band that could really capture all the dimensions wrapped up in that sound – and who would be down to jump in and “be water” with me in the moment! What makes music fun for me is being able to ride the wave of whatever is happening in the present, and make each song feel completely different and new every time it's played – I know I'd trust Ananda, Scottie, Casey, and Hoda to dive into that vulnerable and exciting space anytime, and am excited to do so on March 20th!

Can you tell us about your original music and your composition process?

Like I mentioned, this project is called “Water Dancers”, and to me each of the songs explore the connections between water and the ways it shows up in our lives – the title song I actually began composing from a melody I heard in my head on a Tube ride back from the Academy one night, singing it into my voice memos and saving it, eventually finishing it on a weekend trip to Lisbon with a dear friend a few weeks later (who suggested I call it “Lisboa”, its alternate title!)

The lyrics start “tell me love, do you remember our flowing with the tide, come as it goes?”, and to me, the entire set of music follows the ebb and flow of love as it changes with the tides of life. Each of the other pieces focuses on a different “memory” or aspect of this overarching theme, the narrative spotlighting the “perspective” of a different instrument in this unconventional instrumentation I’ve chosen: piano trio with strings (violin and cello). By thinking of instruments as “characters” in a sort of narrative setting, I hope to explore new ways of improvising and making space to express nuanced ideas in a way that cuts straight to the heart and emotion of a listener, and create an atmosphere, a little world between the musicians and audience that we can drop into together.

Where are you off to next?

Actually right after this show I’ll be headed to Bruges, Belgium to play with a dear friend Koen Gijsman and a wonderful chef in a pairing of music and food called “Let Us Cook”, which I’m very excited for – it’ll also be my first time in Belgium! And then headed back to the States, where I have some really intriguing projects in the works, including a premiere for a choral piece I’ve written that’s being performed by a professional choir in Chicago, recording a new project about ghosts, and some more touring in the future...I certainly hope to be back in London very soon!

You will find stunning photography throughout this magazine and we are hugely grateful for the inspiring photographers that allow us to publish their work and truly bring our magazines to life. In this edition we are proud to feature the following photographers:

Monika S Jakubowska

Tatiana Gorilovsky

Enid Farber

BEHIND THE LENS

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Madeline Bell by Monika S Jakubowska



WOMEN IN JAZZ MEDIA
PRESENTS

WOMEN IN JAZZ
PHOTOGRAPHY
EXHIBITION

HER FRAME.
HER SOUND.

Opening April 10th 2025
Karamel Club, London



Yilian Canizares
by Tatiana Gorilovsky

Bringing together inspirational women from across the globe, the award-winning Women in Jazz Media organisation, in partnership with Karamel Club, present an exclusive photography exhibition:

Women in Jazz Photography Her Frame. Her Sound.

A unique opportunity to celebrate women working in jazz both behind and in front of the camera. Inspirational moments in jazz captured by some of the incredible female photographers leading the way in jazz photography. Exhibiting legends such as Geri Allen, Abbey Lincoln, Alice Coltrane, Nina Simone to contemporary artists including Lakecia Benjamin, Nubya Garcia and Brandee Younger, there has never been an exhibition like this. Legendary and award-winning photographers from South Africa, New York, Poland and the United Kingdom, this breathtaking exhibition features the work of Val Wilmer, Enid Farber, Kasia Ociepa., Monika S Jakubowksa, Tatiana Gorilovsky and Vuyo Giba.

The exhibition opens on April 10th and will stay open for three months.

An online site is being created with further information and for the public to view and purchase all the photos that are being exhibited, which we will share soon!

In the meantime, please click on each photographers names below to go straight to their site to find out more about their work!

[Val Wilmer](#)

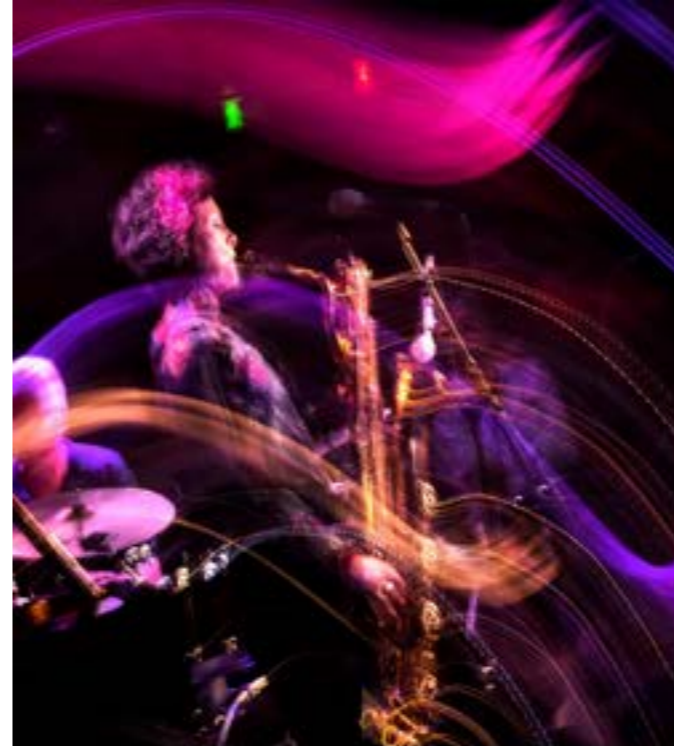
[Enid Farber](#)

[Kasia Ociepa](#)

[Monika S Jakubowksa](#)

[Tatiana Gorilovsky](#)

[Vuyo Giba](#)



It is time for Women on the Walls! by Fiona Ross

You will see from the previous page that we are holding a very exciting photography exhibition. An exhibition of women by women. We have always been passionate about photography and when we first formed over four years ago, one of the first projects we worked on was to facilitate female **photographers** – for the first time – in the National Jazz Archive. We have several **photographers** in the team, but also work with many photographers across the world, sharing and supporting their work in any way we can.

While it is wonderful that most of us can easily take photos on our phones and capture those important moments, we seem to have forgotten something along the way. Photography is an artform and **photographers** are artists. Where would we be without photography? **Photographers** capture incredible moments and gift us with those memories, and often for free. Social media, publications, the news – full of photos. Imagine if it was all just text? Artists need photos, venues need photos, publications need photos and audiences cherish photos. And yet, they are rarely credited and often used without permission. This is a significant issue for all **photographers** irrespective of gender. There are many issues behind the scenes that are not shared and although I am certainly not going to name and shame anyone, I must speak out on this. For those of you that know me, you know how passionate I am about people getting credit for their work – musicians, writers, managers – **photographers**! There have been several issues lately that have made me realise that something more needs to be done, and I would like to share just a few issues, facts and thoughts with the aim of us all reflecting on how we value photography and **photographers**.

I am sent press kits and images from artists, PR companies, labels etc every day, averaging out at around 50 per week. 80% of the photos I am sent are uncredited – and yes, I did the math. 80%!! We always email back and ask for the credits and explain they won't be shared without crediting the name of the **photographer**. Only two weeks ago, I was sent a press kit with some stunning photos, again with no credits. I emailed the PR company and their reply this time was 'it's ok, you don't need to credit them'. This is a company that I have constantly had this issue with, but this is the first time they have actually said that apparently, I don't need to credit them. I am guessing they are fed with me always asking. Why do we not need to credit artists for their work? I don't understand. I told the PR company that we would not be sharing their work without credits, and I am still waiting to hear back. It is worth noting, we get sent press kits, press releases etc to help promote and support the artists, so no photo credit = no promotion from us. It is the artist who is missing out here.

There was an incident at a venue several months ago that we, as in Women in Jazz Media, very strongly felt had to be challenged. During a performance, the artist on stage stopped halfway through a song and started yelling at the house **photographer** saying that she didn't have permission to take photos. This was in front of a sold-out crowd. Jazz **photographers**, in my experience, are often uncomfortable in the limelight. They spend time in the shadows capturing moments of beauty, and do not want attention. So, imagine that moment, when the music stopped and everyone starts looking at you and being yelled at, in front of hundreds of people. Mortifying. Understandably, the **photographer** ran out, upset. A few bar staff went after her to see if she was ok – no one in the audience did or said anything. The next day, the **photographer** wanted to give up photography. That moment was traumatic, and she did not

want to risk going through that again. She did not want to go back to work to do what she loves, the work she has dedicated her life to. She was called by the director of the venue to see if she was ok, but other than 'that shouldn't have happened' nothing was actioned, or said to address this issue. After some further investigation, we discovered a similar incident had happened with another female photographer, but with a different artist. A few of us from the team arranged a meeting with the venue to discuss this and explained that women being yelled at, in public, and to the extent they want to give up their jobs, is just unacceptable. In any kind of 'normal' job, HR would have been involved, the artist would have been sacked and support would have been put in place for the **photographer**. After a refreshingly honest and interesting conversation with the venue, where one member of their team was adamant that something needed to be done, sadly, he was overruled by a more senior member of the team for fear of consequence. They feared the artist might go public about other issues, start something on social media and they didn't want to take the risk. So, the venue have done nothing. The artist has faced no consequences for his actions, in fact, it wasn't even mentioned to him. The message to the artist from the venue therefore is – you can go around shouting at women/photographers in public and that is ok. The message from the venue to its staff is – you may get bullied in public while working here.

Are you aware of how much **photographers** get paid at venues? The fees range from £25 to £250, but it's mostly £0 per gig. You would be surprised which club pays £25.

Some artists have a photography clause in their contracts. **Photographers** are only allowed to take photos in the first half, or the first 3 songs or not allowed during sound checks etc. However, photographers can only abide by this if they know.

There is certainly at least one venue that has never shared this information with their **photographers**. This causes frustrations for both artists and **photographers**.

A 'known' artist released an album a few months ago, with an uncredited photo on the cover. Not only uncredited anywhere (album notes, social media), the artist didn't even ask if the photo could be used and the photo was in fact owned by the **photographer**. The **photographer** saw the cover on social media and contacted the artist. The artist was very apologetic and eventually the image was paid for and permission given to use it. But of course, the credit can only be corrected if there are new prints of the album needed.

Walk into most jazz clubs across the world and you will likely see some incredible photography which helps to encapsulate the feel and vibe of the club. But who took the photos? Are they credited? Rarely. And if you are lucky enough to see women on the walls, they are rarely instrumentalists. Have a look next time you are at a venue. Are there women? Are there female instrumentalists? Have the **photographers** been credited? Are there female **photographers**?

Having become increasingly frustrated by this, and having just found out that a club that had recently been refurbished did not take the opportunity to refresh their current photos by adding any female photographers or photos of female instrumentalists, despite a previous conversation with us and having female **photographers** on staff, I went to a gig at Karamel Club and was greeted by our contact there, the wonderful manager Preeti Dasgupta. She said 'how are you?'- my reply, 'I need to see some women on the walls!!! Please help me do that.' Her response, 'let's do it.' Fast forward a few months, and I am so very excited that we have this fantastic exhibition opening in April, and I am so grateful for the support of Karamel Club. **Finally, women on the walls.**

BEHIND THE LENS

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Monika S Jakubowska

Jo Harrop by Monika S Jakubowska

Isobella Burnham by Monika S Jakubowska



Joanna Duda by Monika S Jakubowska

Ludivine Issambourg by Monika S Jakubowska



J STEPS



PHOTO BY NICK SLEEP

The award winning group J Steps is a groundbreaking ensemble for female and non-binary individuals under the age of 18. Founded and directed by Hannah Horton, J Steps was created to counter the lack of spaces and representation for women and non-binary individuals in the jazz scene. J Steps have performed on an album and performed at venues and events like the London Jazz Festival, Swinging Cat Jazz Club, Jazz Cafe POSK, and Saffron Hall. The group won the 2023 Parliamentary Jazz Award for Jazz Education Of The Year and continues to change the lives of young women in jazz every day.

This is the first in an interview series with the J Steps members, getting to know what it's like to be part of the band! In this entry, we are interviewing: Emily Metcalfe, Nina Mele and Miriam Cooke.

Emily Metcalfe: EM, Nina Mele: NM, Miriam Cooke: MC

Why did you join J Steps?

EM: I joined J Steps to develop my skills as a jazz musician and because I love playing with a group of like-minded friends. It has also helped me meet new people with similar interests to me.

NM: I joined J Steps two years ago after wanting to join a group that didn't feel like a school ensemble, where I could feel confident but still be challenged. I was recommended to try out J Steps by my saxophone teacher at the time and was sent a tryouts flyer.

MC: I joined J Steps because I wanted to try a different musical style as I'd mainly played classical before and J Steps seemed like a welcoming place to learn new styles and skills.

What have you got out of J Steps since joining?

EM: I have been able to perform in some incredible venues, such as the Toulouse Lau-

trec, and been able to share this experience with close friends at J Steps. Playing with J Steps has helped me step out of my comfort zone and enabled me to improvise in front of live audiences. Recently, we had an amazing opportunity to record a song with the incredible Fiona Ross, something I would have never got to do without J Steps.

NM: Since I've joined J Steps, I've regained my love for music after feeling so restricted in more of a school setting. The group has given me so many opportunities to perform in incredible places. Before I joined J Steps I had no idea what guide tones were or how to work out different scales, let alone how to improvise. But over the last two years I've been here, I've become so much more confident with these skills.

MC: I've definitely got better at improvising. We've had lots of really interesting and different opportunities - performing as well as the recent recording.

What's it like playing in an all female/non-binary line up?

EM: In J Steps, we are all very supportive of each other and our rehearsals are always full of fun and laughter. We celebrate everyone's successes and encourage each other when the going gets tough. All of us are fully committed to J Steps and making great music together.

NM: I think an all female line up has given each of us a voice and really allowed us to express ourselves in our own ways.

MC: It feels very supportive and non-judgemental. I don't really improvise in other mixed jazz groups that I'm in, but I feel confident improvising in J Steps because of the friendly atmosphere and the way Hannah directs everyone.

Would you like to continue performing as a career?

'Emily's jazz development is 100 miles an hour! It's awesome to see her growing on her tenor sax, she's confident, stylish playing, and certainly has her own voice within the group'
Hannah Horton



Emily Metcalfe by Nick Sleep

Miriam Cooke by Nick Sleep



It's wonderful to see Miriam growing in confidence since we started J Steps at the very beginning. As a founder member it's a joy to see her development both as a musician and also as young person.
Hannah Horton

It's great to see Nina finding her own voice and sound in J Steps. She plays beautiful melodic lines and it's wonderful to see her jazz journey developing and coming to life. Hannah Horton



EM: At the moment I will pursue a career in the sciences, but I fully intend to keep playing jazz saxophone as a hobby. But who knows what the future holds?

NM: After having such a positive experience with performing on stage and recording on an album, I am keen to continue this interest of mine, one I would not have had I not joined J Steps.

MC: Yes, I would like to, but I am also thinking about veterinary medicine- so it will be between pigs or pit band!

**FOLLOW AND SUPPORT J STEPS ON INSTAGRAM
[BY CLICKING HERE](#)**

**SIGN UP FOR THE J STEPS NEWSLETTER BY
[CLICKING HERE](#)**

HIGHWORTH JAZZ FESTIVAL



Vimala Rowe by Tatiana Gorilovsky

2025 HIGHWORTH JAZZ FESTIVAL CELEBRATING WOMEN IN JAZZ

Amanda Whiting by Sian Trenberth

Interview with Ray Stephens and Martin Wellstead Founders and organisers of the festival By Kim Cypher

On Saturday 31st May the ancient Wiltshire market town of Highworth will be alive with the sound of jazz. Musicians and bands from far and wide will be entertaining folk throughout the day and night in the 2nd Highworth Jazz Festival.

The hugely successful inaugural festival last year was the brainchild of two local jazz-lovers Ray Stephens and Martin Wellstead. Keen supporters of jazz and live music, Ray, who is also an accomplished saxophonist with local band 'Shades of Silver', and Martin set about creating a wonderful festival to introduce more people to jazz, whilst also providing a platform for musicians to be celebrated.

The idea for a jazz festival was conceived when Martin booked a selection of his favourite jazz bands to perform for his 60th birthday celebration at Highworth's popular hotel 'The Highworth' in 2023. I was lucky enough to be part of this event together with Ray's band and guitarist Chris Cobbson's African band. The event was a huge success and enjoyed by all. The spark was ignited, and their dream was brought to life at last year's first Highworth Jazz Festival.

Excitement is already brewing for the 2025 Highworth Jazz Festival, which has just been announced with a key theme of 'Women in Jazz' to highlight and celebrate female jazz musicians as part of the programme.

I chatted with Ray and Martin to find out more about their plans for this year's festival...

Kim - The lineup for this year's festival is shaping up well. How do you decide which bands / musicians to include?

Martin & Ray - "We have one simple policy...we book the music we like! Ray will typically create a wishlist then we approach the artists and go from there. Anyone who approaches us, we both have a listen and determine if they will fit into our programming. This is very much determined by the vibe so to speak. Ray is quite a purist, so is pretty strict when it comes to the authenticity of the music and the integrity and soul of the artists, it must be coming from a deeper place.

Whilst the festival is very much aimed at modern jazz, with a little mainstream swing, we like to feature a relatively wide spectrum, so audiences can experience the broadness of jazz, such as bebop, hard bop, fusion, soul jazz, modal and spiritual jazz. To a degree we want the festival to be an enlightening and inspiring experience, in turn stimulating the audience to explore the music further. This year we decided to focus on 'Women in Jazz' and place female artists at the core."

Kim - How has the festival been received locally?



The Swing Birds by James Hearn



Martin & Ray – “The festival was widely praised last year with some folks traveling over from Ireland specifically to see their favourite artist perform. We received glowing feedback from musicians, festival goers and our local businesses, driving us to continue and deliver our second festival this year.”

[Kim – You are both huge supporters of live Jazz. What would you say to people who claim they don't like jazz?](#)

Martin – “It is all too easy to say that you ‘don’t like Jazz’. Most of us mere mortals have probably said the same at some point in our lives. We need to remember that jazz/blues is at the roots of pretty much all modern popular music and the musicians involved in the genre are highly skilled and knowledgeable in the construct and freedom of music. I usually ask people if they like songs like ‘Mack the Knife (Robbie Williams covered that one) or ‘What a wonderful world’ or even ‘It don’t mean a thing’, great jazz classics that we all know and love. Just give jazz a chance, talk to someone who can guide you through the

music and you will soon find that it challenges and excites you beyond your wildest imagination...”

Ray – “It’s the greatest musical artform there is, and with 125 years or so of jazz to choose from, I’m sure there would be something you would like. Listening to jazz is a journey, it’s about developing your ear and finding that segment or segments of the 125 years of music that really connects with your soul and deepest emotions and learning about how it was born. If it doesn’t make the hairs on the back of your neck stand on end, move on! I often say that what I listen to now, 40 years ago sounded like scrambled eggs, but through a process of discovery, and ear development you end up being completely absorbed by the music and its culture.”

[Kim – Who is your favourite jazz musician and why?](#)

Martin – “Now, that is way harder to answer..It all depends on my mood and what I fancy listening to; Easy listening

has to be Ella Fitzgerald or Louis Armstrong; fun and upbeat, then I would head over to Django Reinhardt for gypsy jazz and for something that I need to listen to and challenge my musical intelligence (as far as it goes), then a little Thelonious Monk wouldn’t go amiss. All that said, because of the improvisation that exists in almost every jazz performance, no rendition of any song is ever the same, offering an incredible kaleidoscope of music.”

Ray – “Hmmm like Martin says, that’s a tough call, probably impossible to answer, but if it’s ok to choose two, and only be allowed two on my desert island, it would probably be Dexter Gordon and Billie Holiday. Reason why, both these artists speak to me on so many emotional levels, they are instrumental in shaping the person I am today.”

Kim – Tell me about the different venues / performance locations in the festival.

Martin & Ray – “We are blessed in Highworth to have a High Street that dates back over 4,000 years of continual occupation.

The Highworth Hotel, set within an elegant Georgian town house, offering us a fantastic opportunity enjoy the surroundings and food and drink that is on offer from their bar and kitchens. Hopefully the weather gods will bless us, and we can open the doors out onto the courtyard garden offering a truly laid-back venue for our incredible musicians.

The United Reform Church traces its roots back to 1777, when a group of ‘dissenters’ began meeting in private homes, with the current chapel building erected in 1825, making it 200 years old! The church offers us the opportunity to enjoy music in a relaxed and calm environment with comfortable theatre style seating holding around 100 people.

St Michael’s Church, which dates back to the 13th century and is mentioned in the Doomsday book, is set to challenge festival goers. On the outside, the traditional church set in its own graveyard paints a picture of reverence. Inside, the church has been ‘modernised’ and has had all the pews removed to be replaced by comfortable chairs that will be placed in theatre style seating at the front and occasional table seating towards the



Karolina Griškutė by Willow Allen

Kim Cypher
by Monika S Jakubowska

rear. The church will also boast a fully licensed bar from which patrons can purchase their pre, during and post gig refreshments.

The Wine Bar offers a cosy cellar venue that probably dates back to around the time of St Michael's Church as it was part of an extensive series of tunnels that connected the church to the key locations around the High Street. The tunnels remain one of the great mysteries of the town. Head to the wine bar early to get a great spot to enjoy top class jazz in this unique underground hideaway.

The Podium is the centre of the town and will be open to all. Opposite the podium is Visit Highworth where you can collect your wrist band and if you are interested, take a little time to browse the history of Highworth. The podium is dedicated to more local bands and will offer you a chance to take a moment to relax between gigs, grab a drink from the Saracens Head opposite or enjoy your takeaway from one of the many great food outlets in town.”





Nicole Warfield by Steve Green

Kim - This year you have dedicated a section of the festival to 'Women in Jazz'. What brought about that decision?

Martin - "Over the many years I have been listening to jazz and attending gigs almost every week, it became very apparent that although there is a plethora of female talent out there, it is not often that there is a balance in programming when events are conceived. My personal motivation for wanting to dedicate this festival to 'Women in Jazz' is simply to offer the opportunity to female talent that may otherwise be overlooked and to introduce that talent to a new audience."

Ray - "What Martin said and it's vital that there is fair and equal representation, and

after all jazz would not be jazz without the ladies that stand side by side with men, some of the greatest jazz musicians and vocalists ever were / are ladies! Adelaide Hall, Ella, Billie, Nina, Mary Lou, Shirley Scott, Anita O'Day, Alice Coltrane, Dee Dee, Esperanza, to name just a few massively influential and incredible talents that have shaped 20th and 21st Century music!"

Kim - Your ethos is focused on fairness to musicians, ensuring all the musicians are respected for their art and treated fairly. Why do you feel it is so important to have this at the forefront of your planning?

Martin - "I am often vocal in my opinions when it comes to undervaluing the talent that is readily available in the jazz world.

Whilst many would happily pay £50 or more to see a 'pop star', they often believe that it is acceptable to go and see a jazz musician perform for free. In my opinion, this is a total injustice as the very people they undervalue by attending their 'free gigs' have dedicated a lifetime to their art and deserve the respect of a fair ticket price. The festival is our chance to attempt to redress that imbalance in a very small way."

Ray - "Absolutely agree with Martin. It's not just jazz musicians either, most regular working muso's regardless of the genre get paid very poorly. Try getting 5 plumbers together for 2 hours for 250 quid. You would probably get charged that in call out fees! Being an amateur jazz player, when I learned that I was getting paid to do a pub gig sometimes what a pro gets paid, I was really upset. I'm just scratching on the surface of the music and it's a hobby for me, it's not fair, plain and simple. The promoters and the venues need to respect the art and the artists."

Kim - What is the biggest challenge setting up and running a festival?

Martin - "This one is probably the easiest question to answer. INCOME - the bane of every promoter's life. Getting the commitment from festival goers to purchase their tickets early takes a lot of energy and time in advertising, promotion and selling. Most tickets are sold in the 2 weeks immediately prior to the event which makes for a very anxious time!"

Ray - "And Time!"

Kim - What can people expect from a day at the festival?

Martin & Ray - "Festival goers can expect to join other lovers of jazz who are immersing themselves in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere centred in a historic setting. Each venue has its own individual 'soul' encouraging patrons to allow the experience to deliver lasting memories of incredible performances in a fantastic setting. We

encourage patrons to capture the moment in their own way and embrace the festival and all that it offers. The day includes a great variety of top-class jazz; over 100 musicians performing 30 hours of live jazz all condensed into 8 hours, across 5 venues; 16 food outlets and 25 'Festival Makers' helping to make the festival special."

Kim - Where do you see Highworth Jazz Festival in ten years?

Martin & Ray - "Ten years is a very long time when it comes to trying to predict what our fledgling project will morph into. That said, we are on a pathway to building the Highworth Jazz Festival to be a premier event in the Southwest, solely focussed on jazz. The festival is likely to be a two-day event within five years with a focus on building our reputation in the UK and beyond for drawing the best talent possible from the wider jazz world, exposing our festival goers to new and exciting experiences.

It is also imperative to express that the festival will remain small and self-contained to ensure that the quality of the experience is not diminished for the ticket holders and musicians alike.

Highworth Jazz Festival is dedicated to the art of jazz music"

Martin and Ray have some amazing talent lined up for this year's festival, bringing together an exciting mix of established jazz greats, rising stars and unique collaborations, promising a vibrant celebration of jazz in all its forms. I am thrilled to be part of the lineup once again this year together with some of the UK's leading jazz performers including our Women in Jazz Media founder Fiona Ross, saxophonist Hannah Horton, vocalist Vimala Rowe (performing with guitarist John Etheridge), jazz harpist Amanda Whiting, Bristol-based vocalist Karolina Griškutė, Swindon's all-female

Hannah Horton by Nick Sleep



Fiona Ross by Steven Tiller

Big Band the 'Swing Birds' and vocalist Nicole Warfield with her band 'Stolen Chocolates', all performing as part of the 'Women in Jazz' feature. Some of the biggest names in the UK jazz world feature across the rest of the festival, including Simon Spillett / Pete Long, Alan Barnes, Colin Campbell Band, Tommy Scott, Jonathan Mayer Indo Jazz, Art Themen, Marvin Muoneke with Denys Baptiste, Chris Cobbson / Hugh Turner, Sean Khan Trio, Shades of Silver and The Other Way.

I am personally very grateful to Martin and Ray for creating an opportunity to help keep jazz alive and for acknowledging the importance of a diverse programme. They have been incredibly supportive of my music and jazz career for many years. Their dedication, enthusiasm, vision and compassion are what makes The Highworth Jazz Festival so special. It feels like a family, supporting each other, united in one key goal - to build a thriving community open to embracing and CELEBRATING the wonderful diversity of jazz in all its forms. Hear, hear to that!

[Please visit the festival website here](#) for further details regarding the full programme and to book tickets .



31ST MAY 2025

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**STORIES OF
RESISTANCE,
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AND KINDNESS**

**DIANA TORTI
INTERVIEWS.....**

Photo by Monika S Jakubowska

MACHA GHARIBIAN

Meeting Macha Gharibian was authentic poetry, as was listening to her elegant and refined music. An artist who tells stories of beauty, lightness or solitude with intensity and authentic naturalness. Musical stories that have deep roots in history, different languages and cultures, or exceptional women. “Phenomenal Women” precisely, is her latest album, released on January 24th. It is a fabulous musical project in which feminism, softness and resistance intertwine with nuanced notes of great evocative impact.

DT: Lovely to meet you Macha. Can you tell us a little more about yourself?

MG: Yes, thank you. I am a pianist, singer, composer singer-songwriter and I was born in Paris. I grew up in a suburb of Paris. A big part of my roots is a mix between cultures: Armenian culture, but also my mother was born in Tunisia, and I had also a grandfather who was Italian. So, I'm from a mixed culture and as a kid I learnt the piano, and I had a chance to have a very good teacher who taught me classical music, and then at some point I was very interested in jazz music. And that's how I recorded my first album and that's how, not everything, but how I began my career as a jazz musician.

DT: As you said your story is filled by many different cultures, places and languages.

What does this range of influences represent for you? And how do you express it through your music?

MG: Oh, I think it's natural for me to mix, because I grew up listening to a lot of music from Armenia, Greece, also Russia. It's because my father was playing music from the Balkan countries, but also Gypsy music from Bulgaria, and Armenian music and Greek music. It probably gave me a very strong connection with all those cultures and the sound of this music. In another way, also with my mother, who was born in Tunisia, we were always close to the North African music and the Middle Eastern music also. So, when I began writing music it was natural for me to use all these materials that were in my blood, I could say. In my childhood I was surrounded by lots of music, lots of artists and lot of materials, it was natural. I sing in many languages, but I don't speak all of them. I can understand them well. French is my first language. I learned English and Spanish at school. I always heard my father talking Armenian although he never taught my sisters and me. But we always listened to his song because he's a singer too, so lots of Armenian songs. It's natural for me to sing and understand the language but I don't speak it so well. I went to Brazil, and I was very touched by the country, the music and the people.



So that's how I wanted to do a cover of Djava's song Nobreza. And the Arabic song is the same. I had like a big feeling with this song, and I decided to record it because I really loved it. So that's how it came in.

DT: Reading through your website and especially when you mention some of the singers who have influenced you the most, I was intrigued by the definition of "natural singers". What does this definition represent/mean to you?

MG: *I think that this is someone who wrote this and I liked it, so that's how I decided to keep these words. Because I don't like when something is too fabricated. Also, my father is a singer. When the emotions come very directly to you without any tricks or without any fabricated or fake things, to me that's what sounds natural. Of course, we need to work on the voice, it's an instrument. I have worked on my voice. I began singing with my father, a natural singer, and I had to work into the sound because of my father's big male voice. So, I wanted to sing like him, but it was hurting. So, I began to take lessons and to understand how it vibrates and how to make it sound very naturally as if it was with no muscles. Although we need the muscles of course, but for me it has to be very smooth, very relaxed and that's how the natural thing came to me.*

DT: I totally understand this. Browsing the web, I found an interview in which you said: "We are all born with the ability to connect without using words. And music is probably the greatest vehicle that connects people". It's something that resonates with me a lot. Can you tell us something more about your thoughts about music?

MG: *To me it's easier to write instrumental music. It is something very natural again, because it's direct. When you go to an instrument with your fingers as soon as you play one note there is something that vibrates which guides you somewhere, which leads you somewhere. When I play with the musicians I play with, there's*

always this connection. When someone plays something as soon as we join, we are somewhere, and we connect each other so easily with music. We don't need to speak or explain something, we just have to jump at the instrument and listen and talk with the instrument with no words. For me this is something which I am in love with, when I play with the musicians. But writing words for me is different, because sometimes you want to express a very special thing or a special feeling and sometimes words are not exactly right.

And you must find the good words for the good song and the good rhyme or the good organic sound, you know, when you write a song. There are some words that will go better with the rhythmic part and the way it grooves, how you sing it, how the sound resonates in your mouth and everywhere. So, there are many steps to make a good song for me which are difficult. But to play a good melody to me it's so simple and direct and it doesn't need all the steps of a good rhyme, good words and perfect words to say exactly what you want to say. Because even when you talk with someone, sometimes you say something, and the person will misunderstand it. It's very hard to be clear, to be honest even to ourselves sometimes. It's hard to really express exactly what you need to say. So, for me music and writing songs help me to say personal things, but instrumental music sometimes is better, because it doesn't need to be said with words.

DT: Your new album "Phenomenal Women" has been released on January 24th and I couldn't agree more with the quote that I read: it "spotlights her voice as an ode to life and testament to feminine power.". Congratulations, because the album is truly beautiful. Can you tell us more about the project?

MG: *Yes, I began thinking of having female voices around me a long time ago, it was probably five or six years ago. And at some point, I had written one song which I recorded at home overdubbing my own*



voice. And at some point, I was trying to call singers to make this project alive. But it was the first lockdown and then it was difficult to make it. So, I finally put this project aside. While I was playing with my trio, at some point I wanted to make this record. And it was Daniel Yvinec, whom I asked to be the artistic director, who helped me to really do it. And in the studio, I needed to have someone with me because I had so many ideas, music, songs and languages, and I needed help to be sure I was on the right path. And it was Daniel who reminded me that I had had this project, because it was hard, and you probably know about that:

as women sometimes we are very good to put borders. So, for me it was important to say: yes let's go, let's go for it, it's now. And then of course there is all the scene around the world about women, about our voices, about how we fight for peace, respect and equality. And there are many feminist projects. I want to say that it's hard to say: ok I'm doing my own project in this subject which is so important. And I really wanted this project to be embracing everyone. So, I read a lot of feminists those past years like Maya Angelou of course. But also bell hooks, Angela Davis and Simone de Beauvoir. Also, Lauren Bastide and Mona Chollet, who are two famous French journalists, and also Gloria Steinem, and I read a lot of feminist books that helped me a lot in my own past, in my own process, in my own way of being myself, accepting all our complete sides. Which sometimes are so different depending on our mood, depending on the day, on how the world is, how we are listened to or how we are loved. We are



so many things, and it's not related only to women, it's the same for men. But our voice is important today, and so it was all related to my readings, my desires, my past as a woman, my independence. You know, how we fight to keep our independence and how we go through all our goals in life. So that was all the things in my head and then I found the team, the two singers Lea Maria Fries and Linda Oláh. And there is also Isabel Sörling who sings only on the Celebrate song, and she came as a guest.

And so that's the process about me really: who I am, my voice, where I want to be. It's a long process, it takes time, a whole life to be ourselves, and still I have to really work on many things. It's never done.

Photos by Laurent Seroussi

DT: I like the image of the woman that you represent in the album, you have already anticipated something about it, and that emerges from the poetry of Maya Angelou from which you drew inspiration. I read it as a "dance" between the extraordinary and unique nature of every woman and the extraordinary nature that belongs to all of us women as such. Can you tell us what the strength of women is?

MG: When I saw this video Phenomenal Women by Angelou, where she was telling the poem, I really thought wow, this is so beautiful! And she's so full of humour, she smiles and she's so smart and she's really inviting everyone. And to me that's the most important thing. Everyone, each person is very singular. In French we would say: chacun a sa personnalité, everyone has their own personality. Everyone has his own story, his own family, his own struggles, his own hurts and we all must deal with that. It takes time, it takes a whole life, but we are all phenomenal at this, because we have to always keep on. That doesn't mean we are always good, and brave. Sometimes we are phenomenal also if we accept that we are depressed or weak or sick, and that's a part of life. I think it's phenomenal to accept our weakest side too.

Also, if men would accept also their own weaknesses...that's actually what bell hooks says a lot in her books. One of her book is All about love, there is another one which is about the masculinity, another one which is about the fact that everyone can be a feminist. And she talks about how men are educated in the patriarchy, in their virility and in having the power. And women also sometimes are educated in this way, in the very masculine culture. And the world needs softness, because we cannot work in a constant fight, like if everybody goes as

a warrior. We are warriors, but of peace and softness and love, I think. And I think that's why we need to embrace us...it's very hard to talk about all these sensitive subjects, because as I said before, I want to be well understood, with no misunderstanding. So, we need to work and see in the same direction, and to really take care of ourselves. Angelou in her poem, and some of her books, is proud of her body and she is proud of her mind, her smart mind. And if we were educated in being just who we are, who we are with our stories, proud of what we do and not educated in competition. Because it doesn't work, it doesn't really work. That makes people angry, that makes people sad, that makes people not sure of what they do. That could be a long talk...

DT: I would chat with you about these topics for hours.

MG: And I could also do the same, because it's so related to our stories. When I read Angelou or bell hooks or even





Steinem, who was the first feminist I read, it was almost 10 years ago, I really understood how our stories are related and connected and are similar with the same fights, the same questions, the same doubts, the same difficulties. And the more we talk about it the more we can help.

DT: I agree with you and thanks for sharing these thoughts. Getting back to your new album, I love the video for "Survoler la lune", which is the fourth track on the new album. It's so poetic, graceful and elegant. Why did you choose this track as the first to promote it and what's the story behind the song?

MG: Yes, actually the first track that came out was Mana Mana...

DT: Oh I love it. I am curious about it, what does it mean?

MG: Actually, it doesn't mean anything, at the beginning I was just singing those sounds. It was just something that came to my mind because I was singing it. So, I decided to call the song like that because at some point I thought: how could I write lyrics on it? It would be too complicated or too sophisticated and I wanted to keep it simple. And I really like the way everybody can sing it.

Then a friend of mine, the bass player who lives in Spain, told me that mana is the diminutive of hermana which means sister in Spanish. And also mana in Greek it's the mother. So, I liked the way that this simple onomatopoeia, which was a game or something to play with, was already related and connected to women like sisters and mothers. I'm glad that this song has a feminine in the title, there is something very feminine. And then the second song was Survoler la lune. I really wanted to add animated images, because I thought this is like poetry. I wrote the lyrics during the first lockdown. I was exactly here at this desk. And it was very sunny, and I always open my window here and there was some gentle wind and I was sitting at this table for hours, writing lyrics and songs every day. I didn't want

so much to play the piano, but I wanted to write. So that's how this first French song came. I was in love at that time. I just met a man who I couldn't spend time with during the lockdown. Those were those moments when I was alone, all by myself. You know lockdown, so no friends, no family and just by myself for days. So, I wrote this song, and I was just dreaming about someone knocking at my door. And dreaming about having this tenderness from someone who comes just to give you this, something that you miss when you are alone, completely alone, because of those days. When I was alone, it made me feel sorry about lonely people, when they are totally lonely. And you have sometimes just your own imagination and you must be strong with your dreams, with your own poetry. If you live in a city, you really need to imagine a mountain or that you are on the beach watching the horizon. You must really be strong with your own imagination, because that's what saved us in the worst, difficult time. It's probably easier for kids that can always play with everything and imagine, but as adults sometimes we forget how to connect with our own poetry or dreams. So that's how the song came.

DT: And it's a beautiful story. One more question. When I read the last part of your website I saw that "you used to re-invent your own universe". Can you tell us if you have already started exploring new ones?

MG: That's true. I'm already thinking about exploring. Now I deeply would like to play and to work on a solo, to really accept that me and I could be enough. It's a long process. It's like deciding to be lonely, to be in solitude or accept to live by myself or accept to be alone on stage and not being supported by bass, drums or the singers or other instrumentalists. To really accept that, and that it can be beautiful also to be alone. I think that is the beginning of my next process, which I have just begun. I just spent six days in a place in the Alps, close to Italy. I needed to see the mountains, I needed to be in the nature and I really wanted to be by myself. I was

in front of the lake, and I saw the mountains and there was nobody. It was lovely because I really appreciated it by myself and being alone in this beautiful point of view, natural. Everything we do in music and everything we go through is always related to our path. That's mine, now I want to explore the solo way.

DT: *Is there something else we have not talked about yet that you would like to mention?*

MG: *Oh yes. When I began to put this band together it was for the 10th anniversary of my first album. We made this big concert where I invited a lot of musicians I had played for a long time. There was also my father as one of the guests and it was a more than two hours show, and I was very happy to celebrate my first album that came out in 2013. But when we began to explore this band with these female voices, I really realised how cool, soft, good and great it was to be working with women. Really, because everyone was so implicated very professionally, very profound, taking everything seriously. But also, there was a nice mood, nice atmosphere and everyone was caring of each other. And now on stage we will begin the tour of the album in March. So, we are three women on stage with Lea and Linda, Dré on the drums and Kenny on the bass. And it's really cool to be a women majority although Dré and Kenny are very kind and respectful men, and I love them for that. But being three women in this project gives something special: special power, special energy. And everyone respects everyone. I mean it goes very naturally and that's the first time that I have really worked with women, and I really enjoyed it.*

Also, I would love to play in London. We might come at some point.

DT: *That would be amazing and we look forward to it. Thank you so much Macha!*

MG: *Thank you!*

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Photo by Kristin Perers

FILOMENA CAMPUS



I am delighted to have an extraordinary woman and artist who expresses herself in multiple fields. Filomena Campus is an Italian jazz singer, lyricist, theatre director, artistic director of Theatralia, academic, researcher and radio broadcaster based in London. In 2023 she received the honour of Cavaliere (Dame) of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic for her artistic work. I admire the coherence with which she carries out all her activities. I often speak to women who tell me they feel isolated and often do not find the strength to resist and carry forward their projects or ideas with determination and perseverance. The honesty and coherence with which Filomena carries out her research and her values, telling so many stories about women and for women, are inspiring to all of us.

DT: Hi Filomena, lovely to have you here. You are an established and well-known artist in the international scene. It would be nice if you could tell us something to help us get to know you better!

FC: I'm originally from Sardinia, an island in the middle of the Mediterranean, and I moved to London in 2001. I came here to do an MA in theatre directing at Goldsmiths College. While doing my master's, I met some incredible musicians, first, Orphy Robinson, who has been like a brother to me. I owe him so much for introducing me to so many people, some of whom I still play with today, including Orphy himself. We have worked on numerous projects together, and I hope we will do more in the future.

It has been a fantastic journey because London has truly allowed me to make my dreams come true. The first is music, I've been so lucky to work with such incredible musicians. Then, my theatre career, directing performances in London and abroad. And finally, teaching at the university while continuing to work in theatre and music.

DT: This interview is part of the March issue of our magazine, which is special for us at WiJM because it comes out with a focus on International Women's Day. I have known you and followed you for a long time and I know that you are a woman and an artist who is very attentive to the role of women in society, from many points of view. You have always told stories of extraordinary women, with a frank attitude, straight to the heart of the story, and with a sensitive touch. Where are we today in the fight for women's rights? And what does March 8th mean to you today?

FC: I think we are in a very dangerous place right now, both nationally and, even more so, internationally. I'm talking about Italy, the UK, and the US, but, in reality, the threat is everywhere. There is a serious danger to women's rights. The feminist movements of the 1970s, one of the greatest revolutions in history, fought for the freedoms we have today, yet these women's struggles have not been properly acknowledged.

The real problem is that our rights are being eroded day by day, and we often fail to notice. If we don't resist, if we remain passive observers of this incredible injustice, we risk regressing to a time when women had very few rights. It's time to wake up. I have great faith in younger generations, I can see it in my university students. They constantly teach me so much, whether it's about respecting diversity or using inclusive language.

I've revisited the works of incredible women from the 1970s. At the same time, there are so many contemporary feminist thinkers we should engage with instead of confining them to the academic elite. Their ideas are much more accessible than we might think, and they offer valuable frameworks for understanding how to fight for our rights today.

We need to do more, not just in terms of learning but also in understanding how we



Photo by Kristin Perers

can resist together, as women and as artists. As for March 8th, I no longer believe in dedicating just one day to the celebration of women. Every day should be about women, men, and all gender identities in our world. The idea of marking one day as a symbolic gesture feels like a justification, something that allows people to say, 'Well, we did something on March 8th, so everything is fine now.' But that doesn't make us activists. If we only acknowledge our rights only on March 8th, we are not truly engaged in the fight. We need to commit to resisting, every single day, because the dangers we face are real, and our rights are at risk.

DT: The work you do is truly incredible. As a performer, I can't help but think of my artistic activity without connecting it to civic and social commitment. As far as I'm concerned, artists have this fundamental "role" in society, perhaps today more than ever. I've already spoken about your deep commitment in all the projects you do. What drives you to pursue this commitment? And how is the role of the artist changing over the years?

FC: I've been very lucky in my life to have met and learned from some of the people I deeply admire. Some were theatre practitioners, musicians, writers, and philosophers. I don't know why I've had this fortune, to not only meet these incredible individuals but sometimes even build friendships or collaborate with them. Many of them have an extraordinary charisma, and they have taught me to see my art as a way of engaging with the times we live in, rather than creating music or theatre solely for entertainment.

I have in fact no interest in theatre or music that exists just for entertainment, it would feel boring and pointless to me. Politics inevitably shapes our lives, and in a way, we are all political beings. Therefore, we need to re-examine this concept without fear, as artists, not as politicians. I draw on the perspectives of thinkers like Hannah Arendt and Adriana Cavarero,

Photo by Antonello Brughitta



who emphasise how politics influences us when we share the same space, assert our voices, and engage with others, moments that can become acts of resistance. For me, that magic space of sharing, where this energy exists, can be a theatre, a jazz club, or a concert venue, as well as a university class, a workshop or a rehearsal room. I can feel the connection, the electricity between performers and the audience, they are all participants. Audiences are intelligent, and I believe we should work together to create something meaningful and intellectually engaging rather than settling for pure entertainment, what Dario Fo called "theatre for a good digestion," a performance consumed like dessert after a nice meal out. That's not what interests me.

Many artists have personally paid the price for speaking out or challenging the system, for example figures like Franca Rame in Italy, Augusto Boal in Brazil, and The Living Theatre in the US in the 1970s. I have enormous respect for them. As an artist, I see the

stage as a sacred space, one that comes with great responsibility. People listen to what we say and do, which means we must research and understand before we speak.

Today, capitalism places immense pressure on artists, obsessed with ticket sales and sold-out shows. Every time we have a concert, we pour so much energy into selling the gig, marketing, and promotion. Sometimes, I realise that 90% of my time is spent organising rather than practicing, developing ideas with the band, or growing artistically. That's the reality, and if a gig doesn't sell, venues are unlikely to invite us back, regardless of the quality of the performance. While I understand the importance of a good audience, also for the musicians on stage, I don't believe this burden should fall entirely on the artists. I would much rather spend my time honing my craft, exploring new ideas, and evolving creatively instead of being consumed by ticket sales.

DT: I am coming back to you with two aspects that characterize you a lot, and which you already anticipated: music and theatre. What do these two worlds represent for you?

FC: They both represent true love and passion. Some years ago, Odin Teatret's director, Eugenio Barba, gave me a book as a gift when I visited him and his ensemble in Denmark. In his dedication, he wrote: "To keep your fire alive." He was referring to my passion for theatre, art, and music, the same passion I've had since childhood, which is crucial to create art.

Although I grew up in a small town in Sardinia that had little to offer in terms of music and theatre—there were no music or theatre schools back then—I have no idea where this passion or fire came from.

Lately, however, I've been struggling to keep that fire alive. The challenges artists face today, from dwindling support (such as ACE applications, government policies, Brexit's impact, and more) to increasing financial and logistical difficulties, are making our

lives harder and harder. Still, I love making music and theatre, and I always will, they are the two vital elements of my life.

For years, I struggled with the fact that I could never be 100% a vocalist or 100% a theatre practitioner, as I couldn't fully commit to one or the other, not to mention an academic career. But now, I realise that this is precisely what defines me as an artist, the ability to reconcile these two aspects of my work and, more importantly, to bring them together on stage. In my concerts, I incorporate theatre, performance, masks, texts, and poetry, drawing on what I've learned from the great practitioners I've studied or worked with, figures like Marcello Magni (Complicité), Franca Rame and Dario Fo, Roberta Carreri (Odin Teatret), author Stefano Benni, and many incredible jazz musicians and friends. Likewise, when I work on a theatre piece, I naturally integrate jazz, improvisation techniques, singing, and live music. Over time, these two worlds have merged into one within my performances. I hope that the audience feels that connection.



Photo by Marco Colombino

Photo by Daniela Zedda



DT: Speaking of women, I know there is one who represents a very important reference for you and that is the extraordinary Franca Rame. Can you tell us more about her and the research you have been carrying out for many years on this wonderful artist? How did it begin and how is it evolving?

FC: Franca Rame (1929-2013) was well known in London during the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. She was a theatre practitioner, author, performer, archivist, activist, dramaturg, and much more, a truly multifaceted artist. She is often recognised as the artistic and life partner of Nobel Prize-winning actor Dario Fo, but she was an incredible artist in her own right. Born into a family of theatre practitioners and traveling actors, the Famiglia Rame, she carried the DNA of Commedia dell'Arte in her blood.

In 2020, I began a PhD on Rame and feminist performance at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, funded by LAHP (London Arts and Humanities Partnership). Now, near completion, I feel extremely grateful for the opportunity to study an Italian subject within a prestigious British institution, where I used to be a visiting lecturer. My research explores how we can view Franca Rame's work through a feminist lens. I'm not only interested in the scripts she co-wrote with Fo but also in her collaborative methods, how she worked with others, the artistic atmosphere she created, and the shared creative spaces she fostered. Improvisation techniques and musicality, both key aspects of her work, are also central to my study. There are so many fascinating elements of her practice that remain unexplored.

*In 1977, Rame wrote and performed a collection of feminist monologues, *Tutta casa, letto e chiesa* (All Home, Bed, and Church), addressing crucial issues for the Italian feminist movements of the 1970s. She translated these themes into a theatrical language accessible to all women, helping to raise awareness of the oppression they faced. The monologues were later translated and performed in London during the*

*1980s. For instance, Yvonne Bryceland successfully performed them at the National Theatre. In 1982, Rame was invited to present them at Riverside Studios (by former artistic director David Gothard), and she returned in 1983 with Fo to perform both plays *Mistero Buffo* and *All Home, Bed, and Church*. But Rame's feminism wasn't just present in the themes of her work, it was also embedded in how she collaborated with others. Coming from a lineage of traveling theatre practitioners, she inherited the spirit of Commedia dell'arte, which emphasised collective creativity and improvisation.*

As a jazz musician, I am particularly drawn to this improvisational approach to performance, how ideas are developed in real time, how phrasing and references emerge spontaneously. It resonates deeply with the way we improvise in jazz, weaving musical ideas and interacting with others in the moment. She and Fo often staged their performances before they were fully developed, relying on the audience to shape the work. Their creative process wasn't just about writing a script and then directing, it was an organic, evolving method that mirrors how jazz musicians refine pieces over time. Musicality was a fundamental element of her work, and as both a jazz musician and a feminist, I find her approach incredibly inspiring. Many aspects of her artistry have never been fully analysed, and I hope my research will help bring them to light, offering valuable insights for future generations of artists.

*On a personal level, she was also a dear friend. I first saw her perform in Italy in 1995, but we became friends in 2005 when she came to London for the open rehearsal of a monologue she and Fo wrote. From that moment, she became a mentor to me, always supportive and direct, especially when I had questions about directing her work. She even contributed to my album *Jester of Jazz* (created with my quartet, with my lyrics and music by Steve Lodder and Dudley Phillips) writing a*



with Franca Rame.
Photo courtesy of Filomena.

note for the cover and editing the lyrics of a song I dedicated to her, Queen of Clowns. That album is dedicated to both Rame and Fo. She has been a significant part of my artistic journey, alongside other remarkable Italian and international artists.

DT: We share the esteem for the work of Adriana Cavarero, an Italian philosopher and feminist, whom I have also followed and studied for years with great interest. I remember attending one of your beautiful events, also dedicated to Rame, in which the researcher also participated: "Liberate Rame e la voce delle sirene" (Liberate Rame And The Voice Of The Sirens). It made me think of well-known words, such as feminism and resistance, which are taking on new meanings. Can you tell us about this encounter? And how can we liberate Rame

and the sirens?

FC: What a beautiful question, Diana.

Throughout my research, I fell in love with Adriana Cavarero's work on the uniqueness of the voice, particularly the female voice. I decided to incorporate her ideas into my approach to researching Franca Rame and exploring how to liberate Rame and her voice. Naturally, this inquiry led me to broader questions about how to liberate our voices and women's voices today.

I invited Cavarero to participate in the presentation of my practice-led research at the Italian Cultural Institute in London in 2022, with the support of the Institute's

*former director, Katia Pizzi, and the participation of Mattea Fo, president of Fondazione Fo Rame and Rame's granddaughter. I emailed Cavarero and asked if she would be interested in coming to London for a talk on vocality, related to my research. She accepted immediately, saying she could prepare a talk on the voice of the sirens, expanding on a chapter in her wonderful book *For More Than One Voice*. She presented her talk alongside my vocal performance, which I presented accompanied by Steve Lodder on piano, with an introduction by Mattea Fo.*

Cavarero's inspiring talk exposed how women's voices have been marginalised or silenced for centuries by Western philosophy and how much work remains in the effort to liberate them. I have witnessed this marginalisation in the way Franca Rame has been excluded from theatre history, as 90% of writings about their theatre focus on Dario Fo's work, while Rame's contributions are overlooked. Cavarero's insights helped me sharpen my focus on the theme of liberating Rame ('Liberate Rame', in fact, is the title of my thesis), the uniqueness of the female voice, and her analysis of female mythological figures, including the sirens.

*This talk inspired a new composition for my jazz quartet, *Song of a Siren* (that is part of the new album we are going to record soon), with music written by the incredible Charlie Pyne, the bass player in my band, and my lyrics inspired by Cavarero.*

The practice-led aspect of my research continued with vocalist and improviser Maggie Nicols at the Collisions Festival in September 2024 at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. I invited Maggie to do a vocal improvisation on Rame. Interestingly, Maggie was part of Monstrous Regiment in the 1980s, a well-known British feminist theatre company that staged monologues by Franca Rame, translated by Gillian Hanna. During their performances, Maggie Nicols vocally improvised around the text performed by actress Paola Dionisotti. It was two women on stage, working with Rame's text in a unique and powerful way. Strange-


ly my intuition about vocal improvisation and Rame had already been explored in the 1980s by Maggie Nicols and this extraordinary company. Maggie is an incredible performer. As part of my research, we performed a duo improvised piece about Franca Rame, embodying what Cavarero theorises in her books. We are now aiming to transform this into a vocal duo project together.

DT: I see there is a new project you are working on: Concert in F? I couldn't agree more when I read about the uniqueness of the female voice. Can you tell us more about it?

FC: Sure! Concert in F was inspired by my practice-led approach for my PhD. Over the years, I began developing a performance about Rame, the one you saw at the Italian Cultural Institute. However, I eventually moved away from a biographical theatre piece about her and started working towards a more open and inclusive piece about women: A Concert in F.

*The "F" stands not only for the note F, but also for Franca, Filomena, Female, Feminism, Freedom, and so on. The project is still in progress; I have been developing it with pianist Steve Lodder, who composed all the music, and in collaboration with theatre director Anthony Biggs. We worked in the style of Rame, using a *canovaccio* (a scenario or plot) rather than a detailed script. In the piece, I talk about when we met, our friendship, and the relationship between Rame and Fo, insights I gained from her personally rather than from books. Music is a crucial element. We premiered the piece at The Playground Theatre in London in November 2023. It was sold out, and the experience was absolutely amazing.*

During the show, I invited a group of feminist activists to read extracts from the work of Michela Murgia, a fellow Sardinian intersectional feminist, queer writer and activist, who died too young two years ago. I wanted to recreate what Rame and



and Fo called il terzo atto ("the third act"), a practice they used in the 1970s, where after their performances, they invited the audience to participate, sharing ideas, giving feedback, and suggesting topics to develop in future performances. In this case, I asked the audience to talk about feminist issues that were important to them, and it was an incredible success.

DT: What are your plans?

FC: As soon as I finish my PhD, my priorities are two: Concert in F and Theatralia. I want to develop and refine Concert in F and take it on tour.

The other project is a new album for our quartet, featuring bass player Charlie Pyne, Steve Lodder on piano, and Rod Youngs on drums. We've had these pieces ready for quite some time now, but I haven't had the chance to even think about finding a studio, securing funding, and handling everything needed to make it happen. The album's title is Theatralia, which is also the name of my theatre company. It represents a sort of utopian creative land of theatre, music, and art. The cover has been created by Sardinian artist Gina Tondo. Everything is ready, we just need to get into the studio and finally record, which (fingers crossed!) should happen very soon. Forthcoming concerts for our quartet: the Vortex Jazz Club on May 8th and at the Pheasantry in Chelsea on November 9th. Hope to see you there!

DT: And we look forward to listening to it! Thank you so much, Filomena!

FC: Thank you very much for having me. I'm proud to be part of WiJM. I have great respect for the organization and fully support its mission. I hope to contribute in any way I can.

DT: Thank you so much for your kind words!

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Photo by Daniele Franchi



TATIANA
TATE

@SherylAronson



Tatiana Tate is exactly what the world needs right now. A phenomenal trumpeter, artist and composer, she is showing the world what is possible with her weapon of choice – a trumpet. Tatiana has played with legends and artists truly at the top of their game including Stevie Wonder, Chaka Khan, Clora Bryant, Stanley Clarke, Arturo Sandoval, Sheila E., Lizzo, David Sanborn, and Brian Culbertson. In a list of ‘monstrously talented young women rising through the ranks,’ Tatiana is quite rightly at the top of the list.

I have been following Tatiana on social media for quite some time and after watching her performance four years ago at The Uptown Jazz Festival on YouTube, I was captivated.

I was so very excited to talk to Tatiana. The energy, the love, the groove that emulates from everything she does is exhilarating and so very inspiring.

Tatiana was involved in music from a very young age in her hometown Long Beach, California and the trumpet didn't take long to appear.

I started playing the drums when I was six years old when my brother and I went into this programme, Rhythm Regiment Drum Corps. The leader, Terry Moore, who passed away while I was in high school, taught me and my brother how to play drums and after a while she said, it's time for you to learn something new. I'm here, just a kid, I get to learn something new, I'm excited! At the time, she only taught brass and so I grabbed the trombone - obviously my arms couldn't do that, I'm 8 or 9 at the time. Ok, I grabbed the tuba. That's much bigger than me...and then I grabbed this trumpet, and I was like, Ok, I think I can hold this. I think I can do this. So, she gave me a book and a fingering chart and told me how to read it. I came back and I knew how to play a whole scale, and she was 'wow how did you learn a scale so quickly, in one week?!' From there on, I have been playing trumpet.

Some musicians have had 'that moment' when they knew an instrument was for them. It could be when they saw a performance, listened to a track, but it sounds like the trumpet was calling you from the minute you picked it up. When did you realise the trumpet was going to be your weapon of choice?

There have been a few moments in my career that solidified to me that this is what I was meant to do. I'll give you a story though. My older brother plays saxophone, and he had been playing in church for a long time, and I was playing the drums behind him. But from the moment I started playing trumpet, my parents and the church members were all encouraging me to play. At the time, I could barely play notes, no sound really came out and it sounded horrible! I was 9 at the time. We were playing a song called 'How Great is our God' and I was just playing to the best of my ability, and this homeless man came into the sanctuary because at the time our church was located in a little bit of a rough area, and we would have people coming in from off the street all the time. And so, this homeless man comes in and everybody in the church is just looking back to see this man and asking what brought you in? He said I heard this loud trumpet, and I wanted to know who was making all this noise. The gentleman ended up joining a church and committing his life to Christ and for me at the age of 9, I knew that if this instrument was able to affect someone's life, then that's something I want to do forever - change people's lives. I believe it was around the same time that I ended up getting baptised as well.

It sounds like you feel that the trumpet is your calling, and that along with your music and spirituality, are all connected to your artistry?

Yes, I definitely believe I'm a vessel and that's a large part of how I have gotten to where I am today. I'm very committed to my faith, and I know that I was put on this



Clora Bryant
by James J. Kriegsmann

They had a birthday celebration for her at The World Stage - I think I might have been freshman or sophomore in high school - but I got to meet her and talk to her about her experience, and we got to play for a birthday celebration for her, me and my friend Chris, we were playing in a band for her. It was amazing to be in the presence of a living legend. She used to study under Dizzy, and she was just as good. She wasn't just playing and singing, she was also composing. But, you know, often in history, women get pushed to the wayside. They also honoured her, at a festival, which we played at a few times, at Central Avenue Jazz. I'm so glad that she got that honour before she passed. They honoured her for her contribution to jazz and I'm still in contact with her sons and we're doing our best to push her memory forward. But she was a huge inspiration for me, especially being a black woman, because up until I went to high school, I didn't know of any other female trumpeters. She was one of the first to go overseas playing a horn and doing all the things that she was doing, so it was really inspiring once I got to know about her.

Playing with her must have been so wonderful! We must all continue to share and platform the trailblazers before us. Especially the artists people don't know about, which is mostly the women. There are still not many female trumpeters, even less black female trumpeters - how has that affected you?

Well, you know, I'll admit, in the beginning of my career, I got really frustrated when I felt like my gender was related to my success. Or when people would tell me you're a girl, this is why you're here, we needed to fill a quota or 'you're a great trumpet player for a woman'. Gender should not equate with success in the music industry. But again, I had to remind myself, if it wasn't for Clora or people today, like Anne King and Barbara Laron-ga, they're amazing trailblazing women. I got to play with them, and we were all sitting in the same big band section. If it

wasn't for people like them, I wouldn't exist. So, if I want to continue to inspire the next generation, I realised that I have a duty to be a voice, to let people know what is ok and what isn't ok. And I actually have a young student, she's 18 - shout out to Tia. She's amazing. She's an amazing young trumpeter. I think what it is, is it's about being a woman in music, but also taking pride that I earned a spot to be here. That is what I like to remind myself.

And talking about earning a spot...you played recently with Stevie Wonder! How did that happen?

I think it was one of those situations where all of the seeds had been planted. Over time, the guy who got me the initial call, had been

earth to play this instrument. I also believe music is very healing and as creatives, as musicians, it's our duty to use our art to do something to help others.

I see and feel that in your music. It really feels like the trumpet is part of your very being.

I kind of grew into the instrument. When you think of a trumpet, it is triumphant, it's loud. In a band it's the loudest thing, the proudest thing. And because I play this instrument my personality started to reflect it, like sometimes I'm loud and ram-bunctious and I like to be in charge. Sometimes I'm a know-it-all, but sometimes I can be soft, quiet, elegant and feminine. So, I feel that this instrument reflects all the different personalities of me, and you know, as women, we are multifaceted, and I feel like my trumpet really highlights that.

Most trumpet players that I have spoken to are inspired by the known legends Miles Davis, Roy Hargrove etc. and in my experience, female instrumentalists didn't see many (if any) women when they were training and it wasn't until later, as they developed and really started studying their artistry, they'd search for women because they're mostly not in the curriculum, they're not in the history books. But you found Clora Bryant early on - and I believe you played with her once as well! This is so wonderful. Please tell me about Clora. How did you find her?

I did a little bit of research in high school, and that's how I found out about her initially. But my Dad had a mutual connection and he's like, 'hey, you know, I want to connect Tatiana with Clora. She's here, she's out in LA and we'd love for her to meet her'.

following me for the last couple of years. He saw me grow through social media. He had seen me playing festivals and seen me do my own solo shows and it was one of those 'people are always watching' type of moments. And once he gave me the call, number one, I answered my phone - many musicians don't even pick up the phone and they're missing so many money opportunities. Number two, I was ready for the task. Obviously, Stevie Wonder tunes, everyone's heard them before, but after understanding the nuances, the inflexions, the knowledge behind how the songs are supposed to be played, I will never play them the same way again. So, it was just one of those moments. Taking the time to plant a seed, to see it but not watching it grow. I'm planting a seed in social media. I'm planting a seed in my musical life. And then once you go back, you have a whole garden full of lovely flowers. Versus looking at a seed and waiting for an idea or project to flourish. You just got to keep going, keep that forward motion. And what I've noticed in my career is, I keep working on multiple things and you know something's going to stick eventually.

It is definitely sticking! Are there any other female trumpeters that inspired you?

Someone I get compared to every single day of my life, Cynthia from Sly and the Family Stone. I was playing in a tribute band when I was 16 and I had no idea who she was. Few years later, and I'm at college and I start looking up this Cynthia girl, and then I start rocking the fro and I'm like, oh, I understand what people are saying now! And she's also an influence of mine, because I'm influenced by the '70s. I love everything '70s.

Oh yes!! This is another one of the many things I love about your work. That horn groove!!

I just feel that one thing that's missing a lot from music today is it being iconic. That '70s sound is all about the horns...Earth Wind and Fire, Tower of Power, Chicago, Parliament...the horns are it! I feel like the horns

make the sound. It's not just having horns, but the fact that the horn players in the bands had a relationship with the music, you know? Music is composed in different cities, different countries, we're sending tracks back and forth and you're missing that authenticity from playing with people that you know, people that you care about and that is when the music is true. That's the type of music I want to create. I have my own horn section and we all have fros and all that.

That sounds amazing - do you have any music coming out?

We are called Melanin Horns and we're working on putting out our first single to bring back that iconic '70s/ '80s sound. I'm going to release a single, probably in May. I play all my music live all the time, so you've probably heard it, but it's called Betty Hubbard. I wrote it in college because I was experiencing a lot of changes - new responsibilities, an adult who's going to graduate and enter the working force, as I like to say. So, it's a really heavily influenced West Coast sound. It's like this beautiful jazz trumpet on top and this banging West Coast depth at the bottom and it's a lot of different elements that you wouldn't think to put together. I named it Betty Hubbard because that was the nickname that was given to me by another legendary woman in music, Gail Johnson. So she gave me that nickname and that's what the song makes me think of. And Freddie Hubbard is one of my faves.

And finally, you spend your time with several non-profit organisations (Jazz Angels) and are a huge role model to so many - especially young women. Do you have any guidance or words of wisdom for new female trumpeters out there?

I would say just in general, that being a woman doesn't make you weak. Being a woman doesn't make you less than. If anything, being a woman makes you better than everybody else because you have a

certain touch, a certain femininity, a certain essence that can't be replicated, can't be duplicated. So, for any young girls or young women out there who are looking forward to playing trumpet and things like that, I would give them the guidelines of looking up Cora Bryant, myself, Barbara Laronga, and Anne King. Grace Fox is an amazing trumpet player. There's so many amazing women out there that are already doing it, already on the scene, but just know that the dream is there. **It is tangible and it is reachable.**

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TALKING STRAIGHT!

WITH GERMANA STELLA LA SORSA



Having interviewed some amazing female artists, I started to notice that - besides highlighting their works and wanting to know more about them and their latest news - I was curious to hear from them about specific topics.

Most of all, I was happy (and feeling refreshed!) about the fact that none of them avoided answering some controversial questions but were very honest and straightforward talking about important topics, such as daily challenges for women in the music/art business, mental health and all those hot issues that we should really talk more about.

We're all living common struggles - from the draining social media management to the non-stop-multitasking work of musicians in general - and I truly believe that if we all acknowledge and share these issues, we can feel less lonely, to finally breathe the sense of a community that we often don't feel part of.

That's why I've created this column: not only to celebrate the successes and careers of some fabulous women but also give them a safe space to talk freely about whatever they'd like to discuss or raise their voice about (by choosing the questions that they want to answer to - hence the repetition of some, for different artists). There couldn't be a better day to launch 'Talking Straight!' than today and I hope it will inspire you, as the artists who I'm interviewing are inspiring me:

**Happy International Women's Day!
Germana**

Photo by Andy Porter

GEORIGIA MANCIO

London Jazz News affirmed her as 'the archetype of a modern singer who can style-hop at will (...)' while Jazz In Europe said that is 'impossible not to fall in love with her voice ... a magnificent example of strength and talent'. And rightly so.

Multi-award-winning jazz vocalist, lyricist and producer, Georgia Mancio has been on the scene for 25 years now and has collaborated with some stellar names, including Dave Ohm, Liane Carroll, Ian Shaw, Nigel Price, Gareth Lockrane.

Georgia also co-directs Eltham and Crystal Palace Jazz Clubs with drummer Dave Ohm, and her own independent label, Roomspin Records (2001-).

She is an honest and sincere storyteller, someone devoted to be authentic and real and through her creativity, a deep connection with the audience and clever collaborations has also committed to social and humanitarian issues.

In short: she is an Artist that has consolidated her reputation both through her artistic skills but also simply giving a lot to the community.

To celebrate a lifetime of hard work, Georgia is releasing her 9th album: 'A Story Left Untold' on Roomspin Records, co-written with Grammy-winning pianist/composer, Alan Broadbent. The first single will be out on the 14th of March and the album launch is on the 30th of April at PizzaExpress Jazz Club, London.

'A Story Left Untold' has already been crowned as 'pure perfection (Jazz Wax) and 'outstanding beauty and power (...)'(Jazzwise). And in a world that really needs more beauty and love, I couldn't agree more that this album is a precious and joyful gift for your ears.

Photo by Tatiana Gorilovsky



GSLs: Who inspired you the most at the beginning of your career and why?

There were some key musicians that I met before turning professional who really encouraged and nurtured me. They gave me the tools, and enough confidence to get started and I will always be grateful to Mike Eaves, Bruce White, Paul Englishby and Andy Cleynert in particular. Liane Carroll took up the baton by inviting me to sing at Ronnie Scott's when I still waitressed there: an honour not lost on me, green as I was! If I ever have the opportunity to pass on my knowledge or experience, I try to step up because I know the difference it can make.

GSLs: Who are your biggest female role models and why?

*All of the artists I am most drawn to are pioneering, uncompromising and unmistakable. - Betty Carter, not only created her own improvisatory language and sound-world, she ran her own label and mentoring facility for young players.
- Sheila Jordan an unrelenting jazz messenger and educator, still performing at 96!
- Abbey Lincoln, defying the expectations of a decorative "canary" with politically engaged music and a "late" start as a writer in her 40s.
- Nina Simone whose searing originals and unbridled performances will forever be embedded in jazz history.
- Cécile McLorin Salvant, whose seemingly boundless creativity and all embracing artistry have awarded her a unique place on the current scene.*

GSLs: Is there anything or anyone that had a particular impact on your career or music?

Meeting my partner, Dave Ohm. We became a couple about 18 months after I turned professional so he has really witnessed my journey in music and life. He has been in the business about 10 years longer than me and has always stressed the importance of keeping a love of the art as untainted as

possible from the whims of the industry. I tend to run everything by him and even when we have differing opinions, he has never wavered in his support and belief in me.

Then undoubtedly meeting and working with pianist and composer, Alan Broadbent. His trust in me with so many of his beautiful compositions, organically turned me into a lyricist and songwriter: a trajectory I had not envisaged.

GSLs: What do you consider your biggest achievements in life and what are you most proud of in your career as a woman in the music business?

In life, to have put the people I love above all else. I have been a longstanding advocate for the rights of displaced people and am very proud of 'Finding Home' - my collaboration with pianist and composer, Kate Williams - that gave a platform to the stories of child refugees and work of NGO, Safe Passage.

I am proud to have covered a lot of ground without traditional industry representation. Producing and directing an international festival ('Revoice!', 2010-2014) practically single-handedly is something I look back on now with amazement!

It is also important to me to enhance our community and I'm currently co-running Eltham and Crystal Palace Jazz Clubs with Dave Ohm: learning more about the meeting points between artists and promoters. At Eltham, we are consciously programming a gender balance with headline artists and while I see improvements on the scene, there is still a way to go.

GSLs: Are there any gigs or recording sessions that you cherish the most and why?

As I book my own tours and produce my own records, I try to savour the satisfaction of having created something tangible that didn't previously exist.





GSLs: Are there any tracks on your album(s) that are particularly dear to you and why?

Quite a few actually as I often use writing as a way to process difficult situations or to pay tribute to an important person or issue. On this release, 'The Love I Left Behind' ('L'Amore Che Lasciai') marks my first time writing a lyric in my second language Italian -with much appreciated guidance from WIJM member, Diana Torti. It brings me close to my mum who was a formidable language and literature teacher and I hope she would have approved both my grammatical and poetical choices!

When I first heard the music to the title track, 'A Story Left Untold', I had an overwhelmingly emotional reaction. I knew from the sweep and scope of the orchestral arrangement, it needed a broader historical context as well as a personal one. Alarmed at the direction the world was heading in, I imagined a shameful narrative in which a nation once again falls under the spell of Authoritarianism. I wrote it at the beginning of 2024 and it's hard to believe where we are now.

To counter this - and because I don't want to give a one-sided impression of the album or my writing - there is much beauty, compassion, joy and hope in songs like 'Heart Of Hearts', 'When The Time Has Come to Part', 'A Lark's Lament' and 'From Me To You'.

GSLs: What do you think are the main issues for musicians at the moment, and in particular for women in the business? How do you cope with these and what can be actually done - on a practical level - to sort these issues?

The never-ending multi-faceted workload, the lack of time and sustainable support, and low pay. Most of us are trying to be our own agent, accountant, copywriter, designer, photographer, videographer, record label, P.R, manager, legal advisor, personal assistant, grant writer and so on: all jobs that need to be mastered and eat into creative time with our art and instrument.

This is compounded by the fact that so much of our work is open ended: you can always practice more, write more, re-search more, promote more, hustle more etc etc. I think my coping mechanisms are erratic and I have certainly struggled with balance on this project (tour, album and PR).

Delegating can be hard but I have some very talented people that I love to work with that help enormously: web designer Howard Lester, graphic designers Rachel O'Reilly and Alban Low, and artist Simon Manfield.

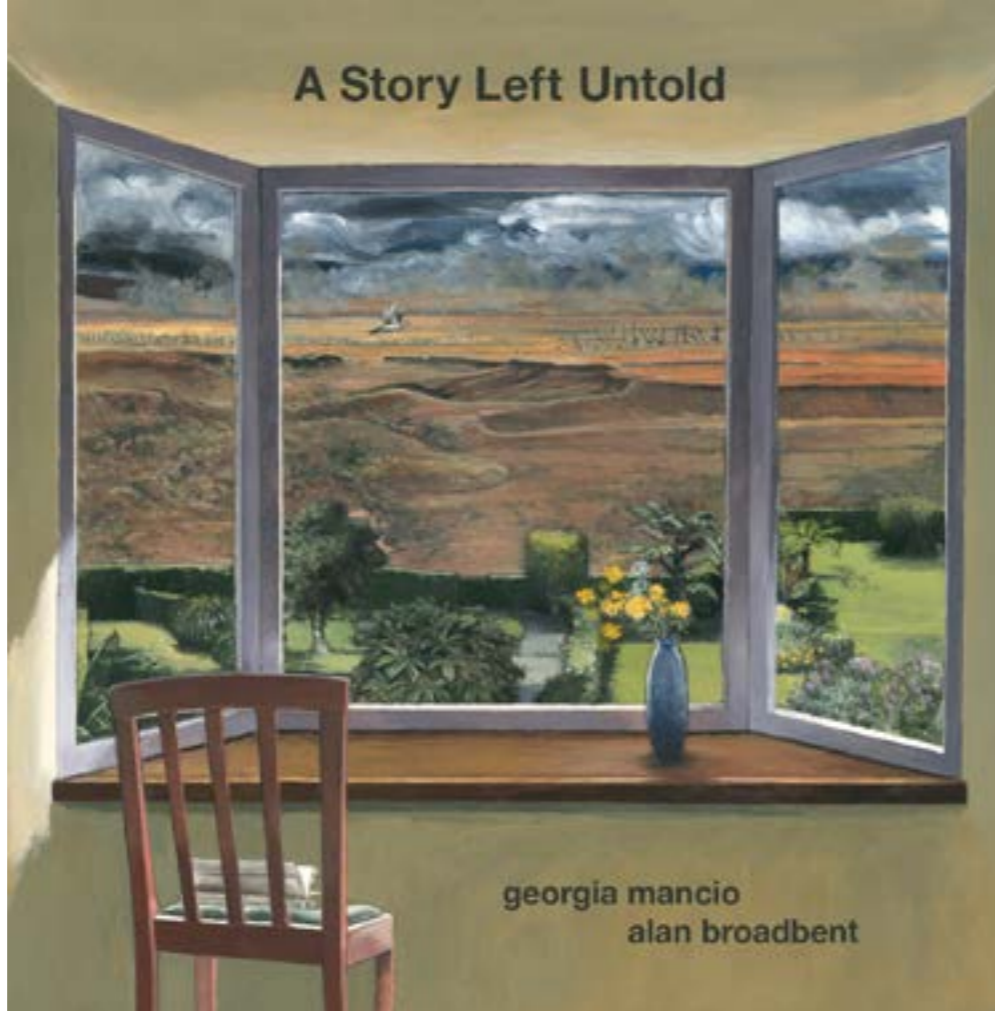
So, yes I try to get out in the sunshine, walk, exercise, cuddle my cat, remember I am a social creature and see other people ... but there are days when I would welcome more structure and cohesion, less pressure and individualism. We could be sharing our knowledge and contacts more, elevating each other's projects and nurturing collaborative touring circuits for starters.

There are still far fewer women (both current and heritage figures) on the covers of magazines, and many club and festival programmes lack a decent gender balance. And I still see disproportionately women judged on their appearance: both criticised for "using" their sexuality and yet hyper focusing on young artists.

GSLs: In a music industry that is constantly changing, what advice would you give to the new generation of musicians and performers and which lessons would you share with someone who wants to undertake a musical path as a professional?

I would say that while you will learn and grow from everyone else's story, you can only truly tell your own. If you are too preoccupied with expectation, categorisation and fashions, you will probably disappoint everyone but mostly yourself. Your artistry will grow as life's experiences touch you, so it is not possible to wrap everything up neatly in say, a year or two.

A Story Left Untold



georgia mancio
alan broadbent

Take your time and be open to the unexpected directions your music may take you: if it is authentic, it will resonant and last.

GSLs: *Is there a specific matter that you think we should talk more about? What would you suggest to sort it/ improve the situation?*

The most impactful change to my life has been bereavement, having lost both my parents, parents-in-law, several close friends and family members in the last 10 years. I was not prepared for any of these losses but it's been compounded by society's clumsy, inappropriate, often offensive and upsetting way of "handling" grief. And added to that is the damaging, guilt-ridden notion that "the show must go on".

It is of course easier to celebrate the successes than confront the challenges, but I think we could all be more caring, empathetic and respectful on a matter that will touch us all, sooner or later.

GSLs: *What's on your 'bucket list', what are your dreams at this very moment and what are your next steps?*

Number one is perhaps the most underrated – by myself included! – and that is to keep going. To maintain a career as a performing artist; to not lose sight of the magic of the music amongst the many demands of the business; to stay healthy and present.

It has taken these 25 years to really understand what I need from my work: to be personally fulfilling but also to reach and move other people. As such I don't think I have ever been more committed to my art, so I hope to keep growing and sharing. Next year I will be focussing on new territories, particularly Europe, as it is a good time to make the world smaller and more connected.

**TO FOLLOW AND
SUPPORT GEORGIA
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ROSA BRUNELLO

Photo by Monika S Jakubowska

In Italian bass player and composer Rosa Brunello's bio, you'll read that 'she is a curious traveler, who is persistently drawn to stray from the beaten path'. And that's exactly what Rosa does touring with jazz icons such as Dee Dee Bridgewater, Yazz Ahmed, Tamar Osborn and Tommaso Cappellato (to name but a few) but also spreading her original music like wildfire, across the globe in Europe, Japan, Canada, South America and Egypt.

Rosa studied and started to play in Berlin, Paris and Amsterdam where she developed her unique style and a range of skills that goes from free improvisations to electric rock, dub and south-american music.

Her mission: to challenge the boundaries of genres; her motto: music without borders. And you can tell it from the first to the last note of her immersive yet imaginative latest album, 'Senseless Acts Of Love', released in 2022 on Domanda Music. Her tour will start on the 14th of March in Belgium, crossing The Netherlands, Sweden, Italy and London, where she'll play at Ronnie Scott's, on the 9th of April.

Praised as '(...) both intimate and groovy, warm and mysterious. Intense and perfect! A true revelation!' (Jazzques, Brussels Jazz Festival 2024), the album is an impressive testament celebrating what's different through a curious and free approach to exploration, love and appreciation. Captivating and magical.

Rosa really is a dreamer, in the deepest sense of the term. As Jazzist wrote about her, '[she] herself admits she is drawn to the space "in between" — between places, cultures, languages, and moments in time.'

She's one of those artists that is truly aware of what's happening around her and knows that staying true to yourself and committed to what you want to do can be the key.



Photo
by Jackie Radinsky



GSLs: Who inspired you the most at the beginning of your career and why?

I grew up listening to The Beatles and the records my parents played on Sunday mornings to wake up me and my sister. When I was 13, I recorded a 10-song Beatles album using my dad's eight-track recorder, playing all the instruments (guitars, bass, drums, and electric piano), singing, and even doing the backing vocals. It was such a blast! Listening to it now makes me smile at my youthful innocence, but I guess that was the unofficial start of my career.

GSLs: Who are your biggest female role models and why?

First and foremost, my mom—she's a family doctor, brilliant at her job, and adored by her patients. She's an unstoppable force of nature!

In music, artists like Dee Dee Bridgewater, Meshell Ndegeocello, Maria Bethania, and so many others inspire me with their strength, explosive creativity, and the energy they pour into everything they do. They remind me of the person and artist I strive to be.

GSLs: Is there anything or anyone that had a particular impact on your career or music?

*Definitely Dee Dee Bridgewater—being part of her quartet, *We Exist!*, has helped me grow both professionally and personally. Collaborating with Tommaso Cappellato, label manager of Domanda Music, has been pivotal for my development. Alongside him, I've had the chance to work with incredible international artists like Yazz Ahmed, Maurice Louca, and Tamar Osborn!*

GSLs: What do you consider your biggest achievements in life and what are you most proud of in your career as a woman in the music business?

Years ago, I set myself a goal: to perform my music outside of Italy. Now, I'm thrilled to be touring across Europe with my pro-

*ject, *Senseless Acts of Love!* I feel proud of always staying true to myself. The choices I've made align with my values and beliefs. These are not things to take for granted, and they bring me great satisfaction.*

GSLs: Are there any gigs or recording sessions that you cherish the most and why?

I am attached to many concerts and records.. but perhaps that recording of the Beatles' songs from when I was a child is the purest thing I have ever done. I had not yet started studying music, I still lacked all the theoretical knowledge and my technique left much to be desired! But I locked myself in my dad's wagon for three days and with that old tape recorder I did everything by myself, for myself and no one else, to have fun with music. It is impossible to find it again, but I always try to find that pure naivety!

GSLs: Tell us about your latest release, 'Senseless Acts of Love'. Where does the inspiration for the music come from? Is there a specific message that you wish to share with it?

*The album is titled *Senseless Acts of Love*. It's a love letter to music, the world, and my collaborators—without them, this album and its music wouldn't exist. Some pieces are sketches I wrote and developed collaboratively in the studio, while others emerged from collective improvisations recorded in the studio and later co-produced by me and Tommaso Cappellato.*

GSLs: Who are the musicians involved in your project and how did your collaboration begin?

Joining me on the album are Yazz Ahmed, Tamar Osborn, Luca Tapino, Maurice Louca, Enrico Terragnoli, and Marco Frattini. I've been collaborating with them for years in various ensembles, so it felt natural to form this exceptional team!

GSLs: Are there any tracks on your album(s) that are particularly dear to you and why?

Every track has a unique story I hold dear. Let's Call It a Night was built from an extended improvisation; Tommaso Cappellato and I edited and reassembled it—it's now completely different from the original jam. Like Bees to Honey is a tribute to bees and also a homage to Ennio Morricone. From the Ground Up was written by Luca Tapino and was the starting point for the entire album's creation.

GSLs: What do you think are the main issues for musicians at the moment, and in particular for women in the business? How do you cope with these and what can be actually done – on a practical level – to sort these issues?

I'm happy to see more female artists and musicians emerging in recent years. However, we still live in a largely patriarchal and male-dominated society. I've experienced situations where I was invited just because I'm a woman or faced misogynistic behavior from male musicians. But I walked away with my head held high, continuing to make my music with even more determination.

We shouldn't let these challenges hold us back—surround yourself with good people, build a supportive network, and collaborate with those who value and respect us.

GSLs: How do you deal with preconceptions of genre?

I strive to do my best musically, instrumentally, and professionally. Music doesn't need labels—people do. But music itself doesn't. I want to make music, plain and simple.

GSLs: Which advice would you give to someone who worries about stereotypes and labels or to someone who is struggling to take the steps forward towards what they really want to do and/or be?

Now is the time to do it! Let's break down the barriers of genre, labels, and stereotypes. It might feel tough at first, but the rewards will be worth the effort.

GSLs: In a music industry that is constantly changing, what advice would you give to the new generation of musicians and performers and which lessons would you share with someone who wants to undertake a musical path as a professional?

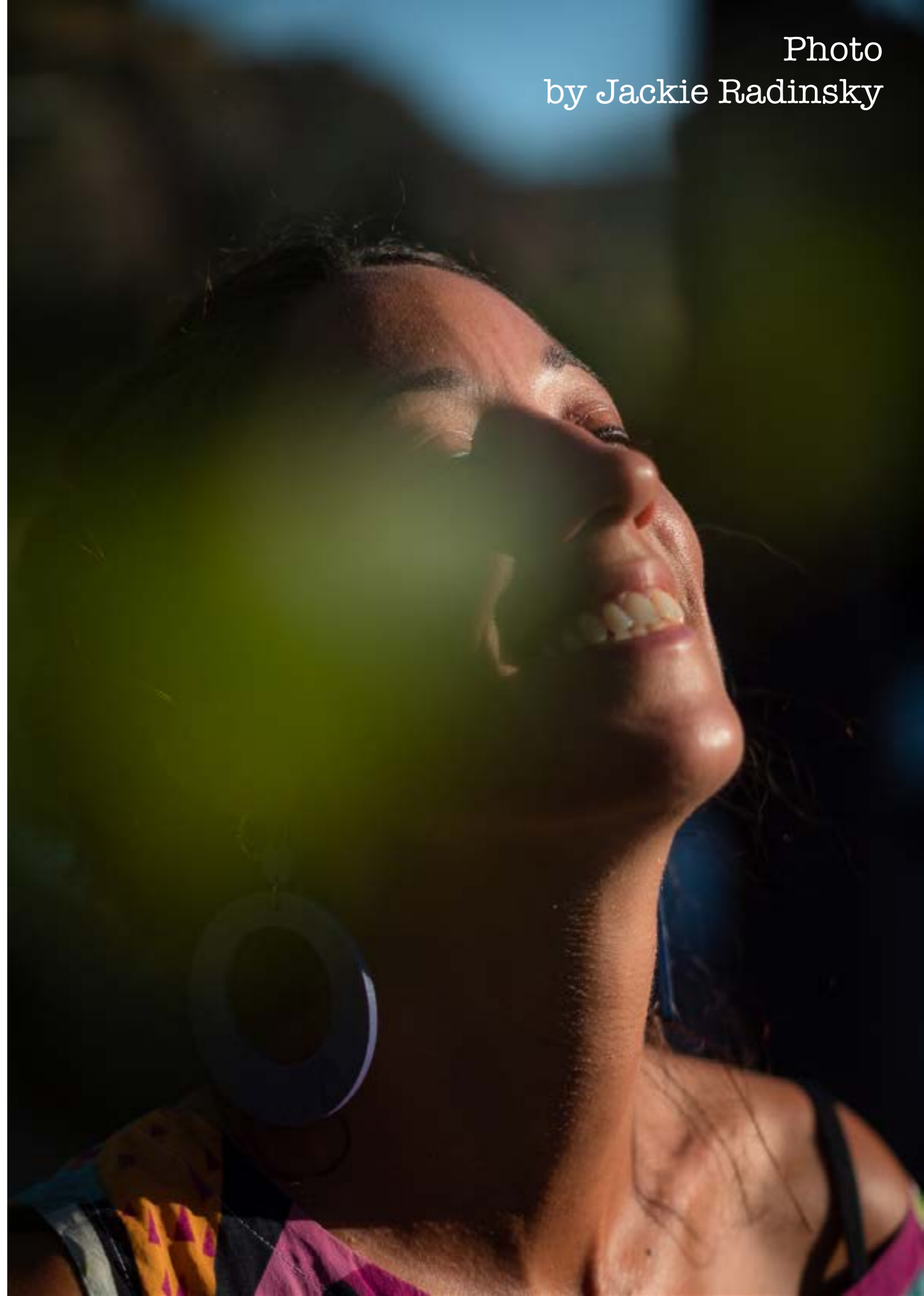
Above all, be honest with yourself. Respect your needs and limits, whether physical or mental. It's not just about playing well—it's about working well with others, maintaining harmony, communicating effectively, and being organized.

GSLs: We hear a lot about artists struggling to keep up with a music industry that is increasingly demanding. Nowadays, it seems like artists feel more and more obliged to constantly create content and new 'products' - even if this often impacts their wellbeing - in order not to 'disappear' or for the fear of feeling like a failure and being forgotten. What do you think about this?

Unfortunately, this is what the industry often demands. But I think everyone should follow their own rhythm. Personally, I already struggle to keep up with Instagram and Facebook—I'm even considering alternatives! Let's see how long I last! In general, and particularly in this context, I believe it's crucial to respect yourself, listen to your needs, and treat yourself with kindness. If that means stepping back from the scene for a while to take care of yourself, I don't think people quickly forget genuine talent.

GSLs: How do you take care of yourself? Do you take breaks from social media? What would you recommend to balance life outside work and being an artist?

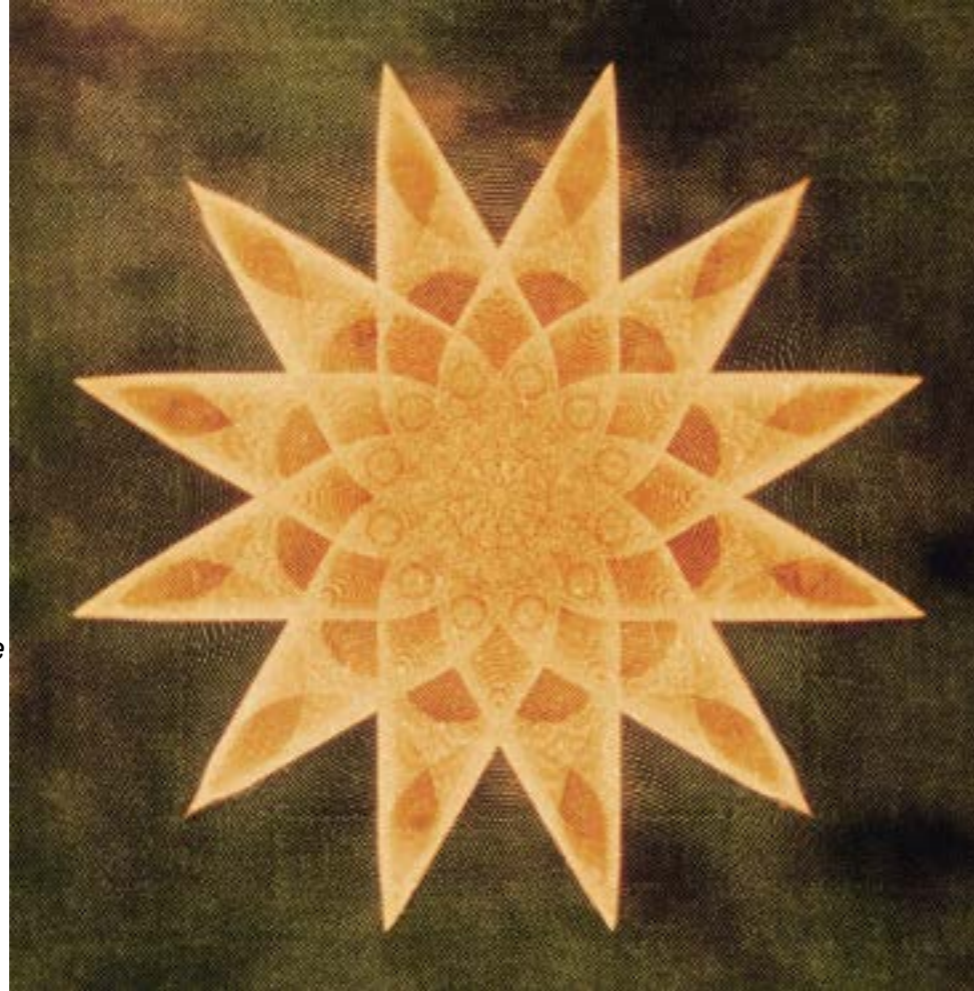
After 15 years of not doing so, I've just returned from a three-week total break—no social media, no emails, nothing. I highly



recommend anyone who can to do this at least once a year!

GSLs: *Is there a specific matter that you think we should talk more about? What would you suggest to sort it/ improve the situation?*

I think we are living in a historical moment where many things are already changing in the music industry. But, for example, regarding live music, more can be done, such as organizing more festivals featuring young and emerging artists, giving them the chance to be heard (I'm not saying there aren't any, on the contrary! Fortunately, I already see growth. But there are still a majority of "old-school" festivals and jazz clubs that keep featuring the same names). And perhaps making these concerts more affordable for a younger audience.



GSLs: *What's on your 'bucket list', what are your dreams at this very moment and what are your next steps?*

I'm at a point in my life where, for the first time, I'm seeing a long-held dream come true—the dream of taking my music beyond the borders of my own country and traveling with my project. This is a goal I've been working toward for many years, and I know I can't give up now. It's a milestone, the halfway point that allows me to keep bringing my music abroad and pursuing new international collaborations.

TO FOLLOW AND SUPPORT ROSA PLEASE VISIT HER WEBSITE BY [CLICKING HERE](#)

TO PURCHASE THE NEW ALBUM CLICK ON THE ALBUM COVER ABOVE

TO FOLLOW AND SUPPORT GERMANA PLEASE VISIT HER WEBSITE BY [CLICKING HERE](#)

Photo by Jeff Banks



AI AND THE CREATIVE ARTS BY PAULETTE JACKSON

I have written quite a few articles about music, artists and the industry as a whole. Since the invasion of AI, particularly in the creative arts space, a few things have come to mind and I admit, I have mixed feelings about AI and how it affects the arts and entertainment industry.

First, let's think about what AI stands for, Artificial Intelligence. Now, I get that we live in very different times and the tools we use to aid us in our creative endeavors, whether it be music, graphic design, marketing, writing, etc., have evolved. However, I guess I am old school in a lot of ways, and feel that nothing should replace the human touch when it comes to the creative mind and spirit.

Artificial, by definition, means: something that is made by humans, often to imitate something natural. Let's think about this for a moment, to imitate something natural, hmmm. For me, the arts have always been a way of life, they are embedded in me, and the thing I have respect and love for, is the passion and spirit in which artists express their gifts through their perspective talents. We as creatives, I've always felt, are cut from a different fabric than the rest of the world. We feel things deeply and through those various emotions, we create wondrous things, from music to fashion.

I won't argue that AI technology can be a useful, additional tool, but will say that it should not completely take over the true creative nature of an artist. AI should never take over where artistry begins. We should not rely solely on AI, we should trust our heart and soul when it comes to arts and media marketing & promotion. Speaking as a woman creative, I cannot write, sing, record, design, etc., without the passion. Yes, I use certain tools to help me in areas that I may not be the best at, in order to put forth my best work. We as women artists, have an extra special something that manifests through our work, at least that is my perspective on it. Nothing beats the human touch as far as I am concerned, especially when it comes to the creative arts, but I would not discourage anyone from using AI technology if it genuinely helps you create something spectacular. However, I would advise not to rely solely on AI but to rely more on what you have inside of you.

Now go and be your creative self!

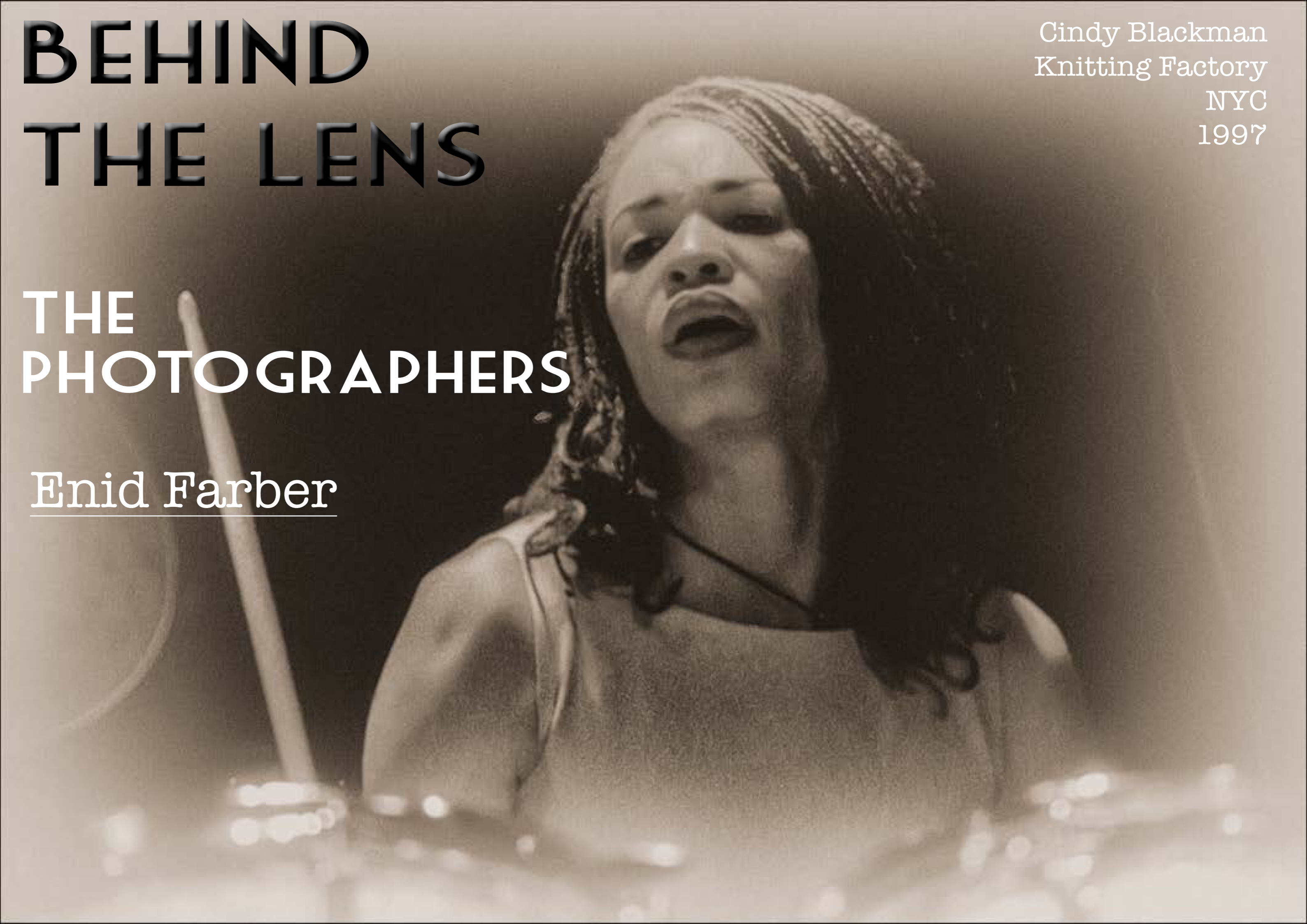
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BEHIND THE LENS

Cindy Blackman
Knitting Factory
NYC
1997

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Enid Farber



Jazzmeia Horn & Lakecia Benjamin
Charlie Parker Jazz Festival
Tompkins Square Park
2019



Abbey Lincoln
Apollo Theater
2002





BEHIND THE LENS

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Tatiana Gorilovsky

Yolanda Brown by Tatiana Gorilovsky



Cristina Gatti by Tatiana Gorilovsky

Elaine Correa & La Evolucion Orchestra
by Tatiana Gorilovsky

ronnie scott's
JAZZ CLUB



Emeli Sande
by Tatiana Gorilovsky



Judy Jackson
by Tatiana Gorilovsky



Photo by Justyna Neryng



BETTY ACCORSI

Betty Accorsi is an Italian-born saxophone player, multi-instrumentalist and composer who studied classical saxophone at Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan, later pursuing jazz at Trinity Laban (London) and at Goldsmiths University of London. Betty now lives in Brighton where she regularly performs across the UK.

Her main project is the Betty Accorsi Quartet. In 2020 they released 'The Cutty Sark Suite', an album of original compositions that introduced the Quartet's sound as a blend of elegant, melodic, recognisably European soprano sax lines with an intensely dynamic rhythm section. Their second album *Growing Roots* was released on 2022. Betty's approach has evolved into a refined, evocative, lyrical jazz blending her many influences into a cinematic style with echoes of John Surman, Jan Garbarek, and Pat Metheny. The release of the single 'Footprints' precludes the recording of a new album this year centred around the concept

of the relationship between artists and nature. Wayne Shorter brings the power of the composer to observe and translate reality to one of the highest points in the history of jazz.

"My relationship with Wayne Shorter started in 2017 while I was preparing for my admission exam to Trinity Laban. My Italian saxophone teacher, Ausonio Calò, a brilliant soprano saxophone player, suggested that I specialise in soprano saxophone. This pull towards the soprano in jazz brought me to listen to Wayne Shorter a lot. As a composer and saxophonist, I admired how Wayne's compositions were always built upon a deep concept, a rarity in jazz and more common in classical music. We chose to rearrange *Footprints* as it is a very popular jazz standard by Shorter, but we inserted a dialogue between the trombone and soprano as the frame for the piece. I sing the beautiful lyrics written by Terry Callier to add a special meaning to the song."

Our podcast series cover a wide range of topics, all created to platform, inform, discuss and celebrate women working in the jazz industry. You can find our podcasts at Number 12 in the top 60 Best Jazz Podcasts in FeedSpot!

We were thrilled to have our 'In Conversation With...' series nominated by the Women's International Podcast awards in the 'Changing the World one moment at a time' category.

Available on Spotify, Apple, Google and Anchor.

THE WOMEN IN JAZZ MEDIA PODCAST SERIES





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KICKING DOWN
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a podcast series platforming
inspirational black women working
in the music industry with host

MARY
SHO



MARY SHO
TALKS TO

CHINA
MOSES

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KICKING DOWN
THE DOOR



Relaunching our podcast series 'Kicking Down the Door' in partnership Céline Peterson and Black Lives in Music with host Mary Sho, platforming inspirational black women in the Music industry.

And kicking down the door to start us off, we are thrilled to welcome our first guest the inspirational singer/songwriter/producer and legend China Moses



IN CONVERSATION WITH...

WITH HOST HANNAH HORTON

Click on the images to go straight to the podcast!

Tara Minton

Kai Hoffman

Lily Dior

Lara De Bedler & Charlotte Keeffe



Photo by Tatiana Gorilovsky



STICKS AND THRONES

Shining a light on
drummers from around
the world



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Ciara Chinniah
Jenny Pearson-Walinetzki



WITH
MIGDALIA
VAN DER HOVEN

THE NOTES BETWEEN WITH LARA EIDI



A podcast series about the
world
of songwriting



In the latest episode we welcome
Louise Dodds!
Photo by Kris Kesia

Click on the image
to go straight
to find out more!

Photo by Alexandros Petrakis

ON THE BOOKCASE

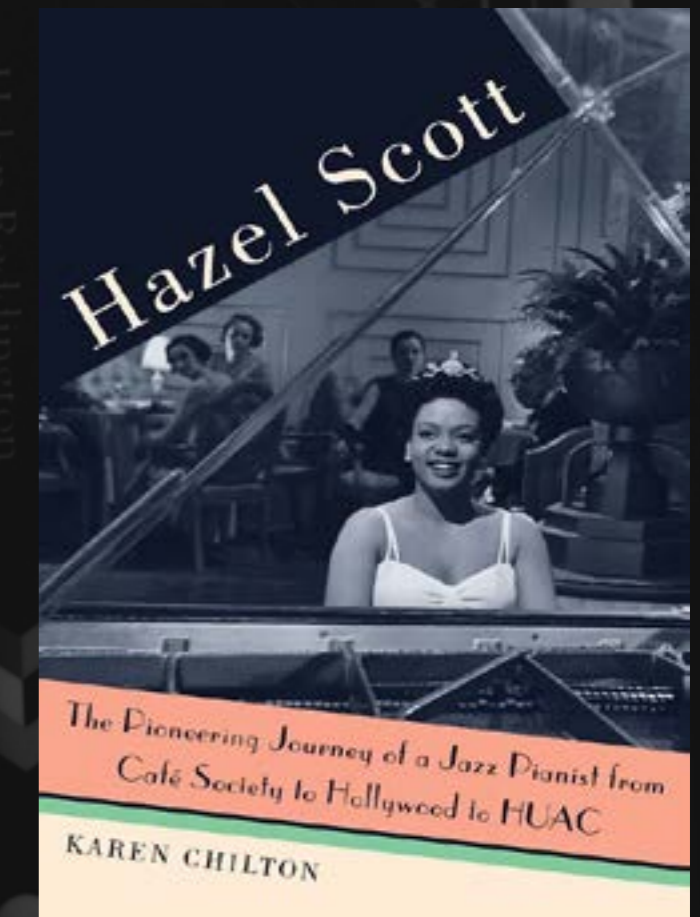
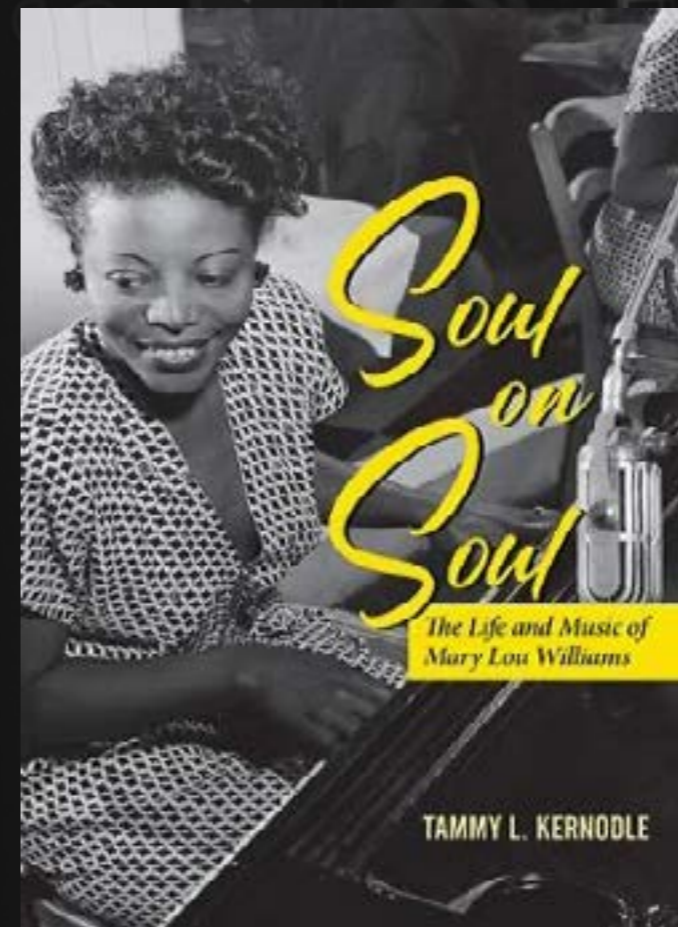
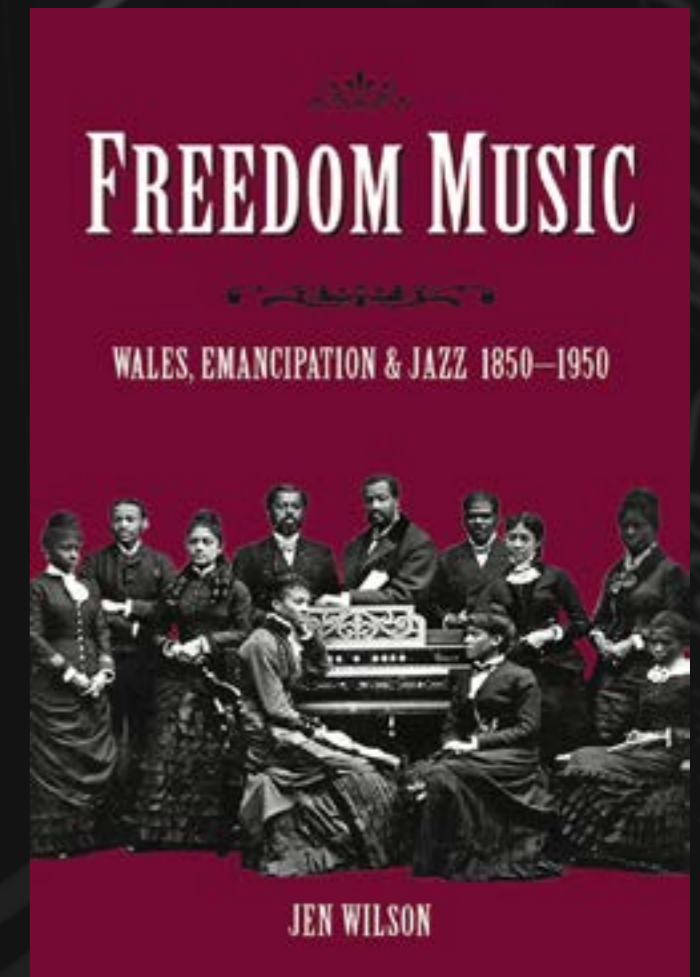
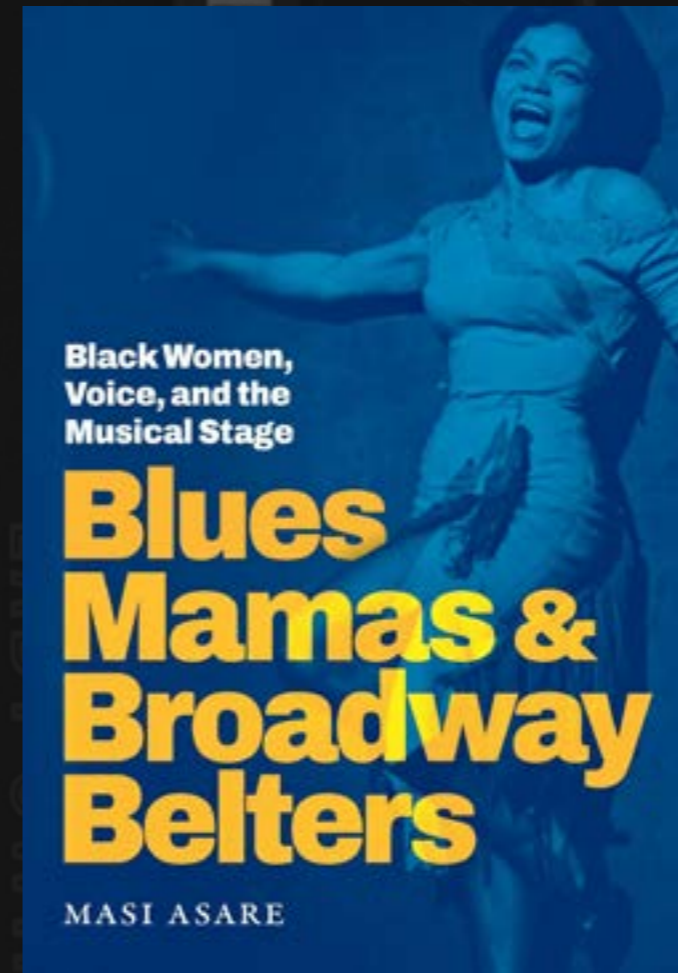


The Women In Jazz Media bookcase is all about platforming female authors from across the world. With almost 100 books, all the books included on our bookcase are also on our physical bookcase and we are very happy to share them with you all.

Our On The Bookcase podcast series explores some of the books on our bookcase and we love speaking to authors about their work. Our guests so far have been:

- Jordannah Elizabeth
- Maria Golia
- Dr Tammy Kernodle
- Monika Herzig
- Paulette Jackson
- Dr Joan Cartwright
- Tish Oney
- Maxine Gordon
- Stephanie Stein Crease
- Arlette Hovinga
- Judith Tick
- Dr Alexis McGee

Click on the image to go straight to the podcasts!



ON THE Women in Jazz Media PLAYLIST



Yolanda Brown by Tatiana Gorilovsky

BRAD STONE

We are thrilled to welcome the award-winning Brad Stone back as our guest curator for our Women in Jazz Media Playlist for this edition.

Brad has been a radio programmer and music director for the past 40+ years and is the host of the brilliant 'The Creative Source' on www.soulandjazz.com which always features a beautifully diverse mix of progressive jazz and fusion, new jazz releases, current artists and original compositions. He is also the 2-time winner of the Bobby Jackson Award for Internet/Non-terrestrial jazz programming, 7-time winner of Jazz Programmer of the Year with Gavin and JazzWeek and winner of the Duke DuBois Humanitarian Award at JazzWeek for lifetime contributions to the jazz music and jazz radio community.

To listen to Brad's 'The Creative Source' show on Soul and Jazz, click [here](#)

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ARTIST!**

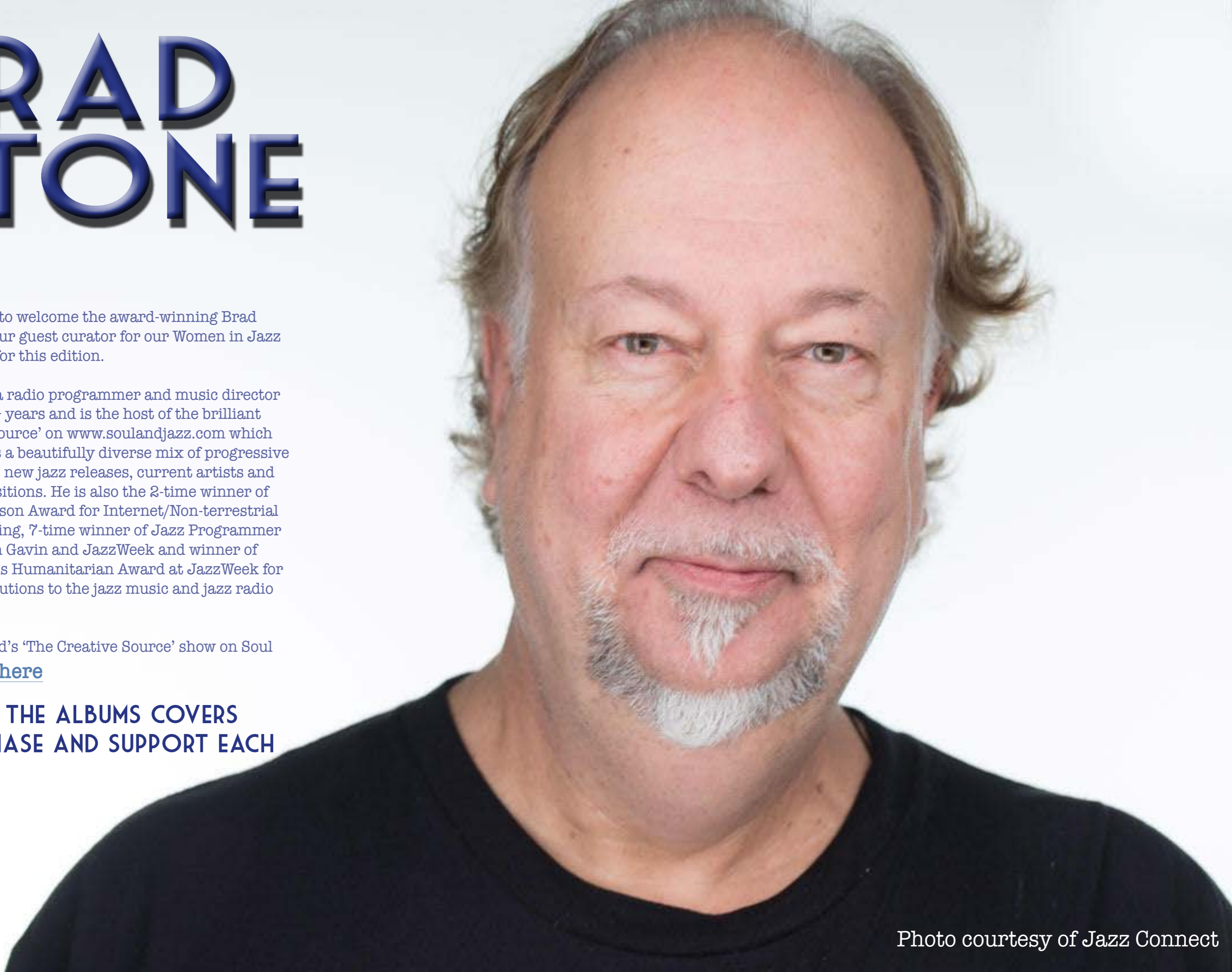


Photo courtesy of Jazz Connect



MAFALDA MINNOZZI



Mafalda Minnozzi
“rio fonic”
Musica Popolare Italiana
2024

Italian vocalist Mafalda Minnozzi has embraced the Brazilian music idiom of her adopted homeland, as she splits her time these days between Sao Paolo and New York City. Her new album features a mixture of her own compositions, some by Roberto Mesescal (who also makes guest appearances on most of the tracks), as well as 4 Jobim tunes, and a couple co-written between Minnozzi and stellar guitarist/producer Paul Ricci. If you're into Brazilian vocal music, this one's for you!

RENEE ROSNES

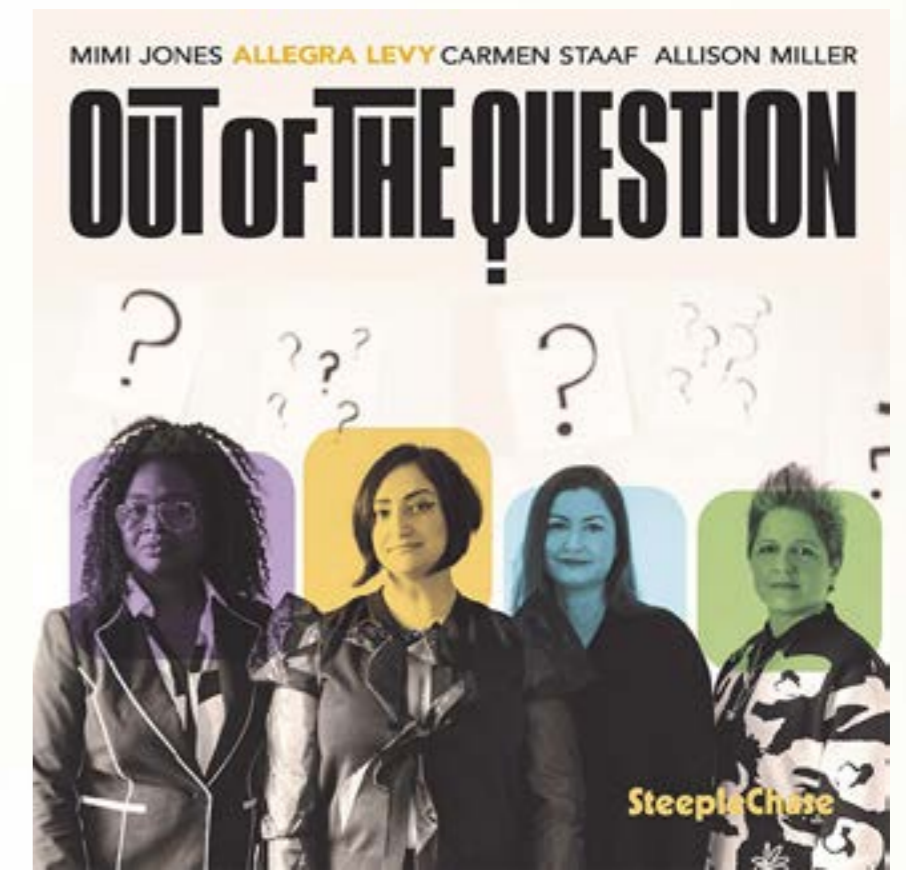


**Renee Rosnes
“Crossing Paths”
Smoke Sessions Records 2024**

Speaking of Brazilian music, Keyboard Maestra Renee Rosnes explores that genre deftly and compellingly on her new album. She tackles compositions by the best of the best from Brazil: Jobim, Nascimento, Gil, Veloso, Gismonti and others, as well as Edu Lobo (who appears on vocals on the album). Although she’s primarily thought of as a pianist, I absolutely love her Fender Rhodes work on several tracks on this one! An all-star lineup including Chris Potter, Steve Davis, Chico Pinheiro, John Patitucci, Rogerio Boccato, Shelley Brown, Adam Cruz and other notable guest vocalists Maucha Adnet and Joyce Moreno. I’ve played several tracks on my radio program – each time I hear this album, I like it more and more!

One of her best works.

ALLEGRA LEVY



Allegra Levy
“Out of the Question”
SteepleChase
2024

Jazz radio here in the U.S. has recently seen an increase in releases sent to us on the wonderful Danish jazz label SteepleChase – and that is a good thing! One such new release that I received last year is this one by vocalist Allegra Levy. She offers up an interesting mix of tunes for her repertoire – originals and a diverse selection of standards (e.g. Benny Golson, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, a couple to which she contributes lyrics), and pop tunes by The Clash and Carole King. Featuring an all-star band with Allison Miller (drums), Carmen Staaf (piano and Rhodes), Mimi Jones (bass), Roxy Coss (saxes), Andrew Baird (guitar), and the omnipresent Aubrey Johnson contributing background vocals on a couple of tracks.

Photo by Erika Kaplain

Photo by Frank Heath

patricia brennan septet
BREAKING STRETCH

Patricia Brennan Septet
“Breaking Stretch”
Pyroclastic Records
2024

Some of New York’s finest in the progressive music scene there gather to record this new album by vibraphonist Patricia Brennan: Mark Shim (tenor), Adam O’Farrill (trumpet), Marcus Gilmore (drums), Mauricio Morales (percussion), Kim Cass (bass) and Jon Irabagon (alto and soprano saxes). The group all contribute collectively to a rhythmically engaging and harmonically advanced work. Issued on an important New York label for innovative and forward-thinking music.

PATRICIA BRENNAN



CLAIRE MARTIN



Photo by Kenny McCracken



Claire Martin
“Almost in Your Arms”
Stunt Records
2024

The U.K.'s Claire Martin has released another album on Copenhagen based Stunt Records, and we're glad she did! The vocalist features a repertoire of non-standard songs from a variety of composers, such as Carole King, Rufus Wainwright, Mark Winkler, Tom Waits and others - and give them her superb treatment with her wonderful group. Vibraphonist Joe Locke makes appearances on 3 tracks.

JESSICA JONES

Photo by Marc Greene



Jessica Jones Quartet
"Edible Flowers"
Reva Records
2025

Featuring the dual tenor sax powerhouses, husband and wife team Jessica and Tony Jones, along with the powerhouse rhythm duo of Stomu Takeishi on bass and Deszon Claiborne on drums, the quartet bring their jazz-funk fusion and heavy improvisation on this, their third quartet release.

The S.F. Bay area has known about this fine group for quite a while now – time for them to get more attention globally!



SIVAN ARBEL

Sivan Arbel
"Oneness"
Sivan Arbel Music
2024

Israeli-born, NY denizen vocalist Sivan Arbel has released her third album "Oneness" just a few months ago. This album is a giant leap for her – her wonderful compositions and arrangements, coupled with her stunning voice and multiple cultural influences, make for a hugely pleasing listen. Jay Gandhi's bansuri flute is a captivating presence right out of the gate on the incredible multi-ethnic influenced first track "Dreamland".

Nick Hetko contributes some very nice keyboard work, Aubrey Johnson lends her beautiful voice to the title track as well, along with Daniel Fresco

Photo by Lawrence Sumulong

MARINA ALBERO



A
NOMAD
OF SOUND

Marina Albero
“A Nomad of Sound”
Marina Albero
2024

Born in Barcelona, having lived in Cuba and elsewhere, and recording this album in New Orleans during a residency there – keyboard extraordinaire Albero brings all these influences on her new release, so aptly named. My favorite track is “19 Y 42”, a rollicking Latin jazz fusion number that showcases her wonderful contributing musicians in addition to her holding down the montuno. If your tastes lean towards a heavy world influence in your jazz, this album is for you.

Photo by Fifi LaRue

EUGENIE JONES



Eugenie Jones
"Eugenie"
Openmic Records
2024



Seattle-based vocalist Eugenie Jones impresses once again with her new release, simply entitled "Eugenie". She performs a variety of songs, some originals, others composed by musicians as diverse as Duke Ellington, Nat Adderley, Carole King and Marvin Gaye. I particularly love her take on Nina Simone's "Sinnerman".

KRIS DAVIS

The Kris Davis Trio
"Run the Gauntlet"
Pyroclastic Records
2024

I was fortunate to see this trio, featuring Robert Hurst on bass and Johnathan Blake on drums, perform live at the Kuumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz, California a few months back, and they played selections from this new album. Kris Davis is a piano player possessing superb technique and advanced harmonic sophistication. Her music is at times angular and dense, other times quite lush and melodic. It was fun to watch this trio interact – they obviously greatly enjoy playing this music live! Sublime.



Photo by Peter Gannushkin

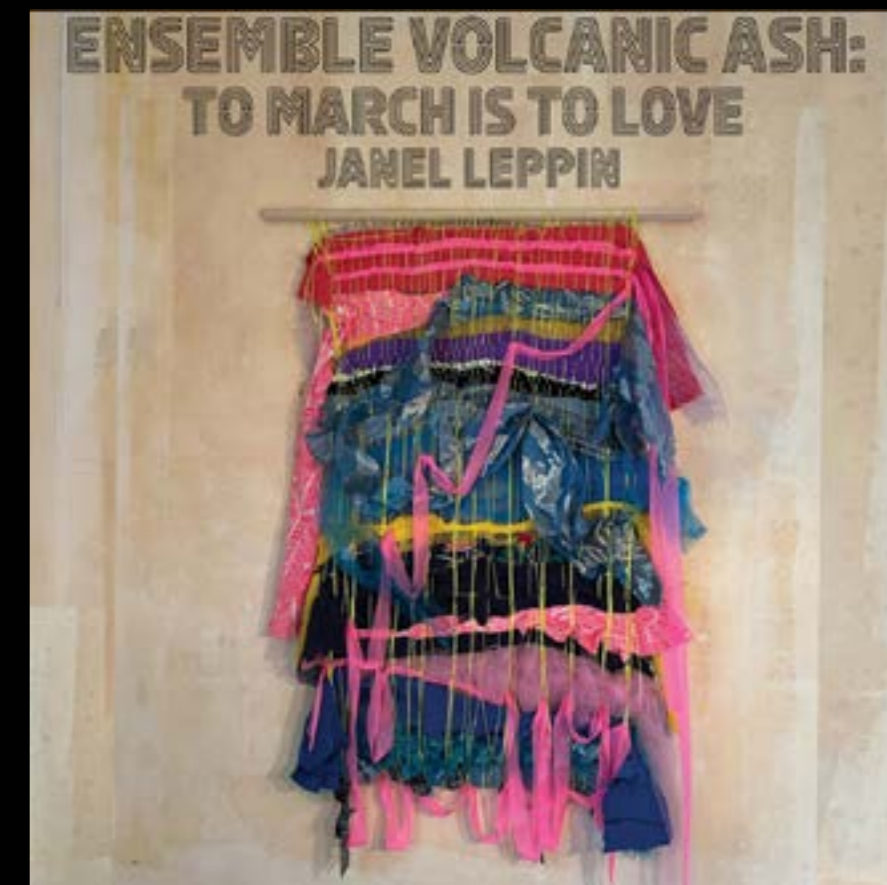
REBECCA COUPE FRANKS

Rebecca Coupe Franks
“Landscape Suites for Trumpet”
RCF Records
2024

I've followed Ms. Franks' career for many years now and have played her music on the air regularly. Her albums have encompassed straight-ahead jazz to more contemporary concepts to singer-songwriter compositions. This album may be her most ambitious yet. Featuring a multi-instrumental cast of musicians, notably including Jessica Jones on tenor sax and Jeff Siegel on drums, this is a lushly gorgeous and sublime work that may be her best yet!



JANEL LEPPIN



Janel Leppin
“To March is Love”
(as Janel Leppin’s Ensemble Volcanic Ash)
Cuneiform Records – 2024

I remember Steve Feigenbaum and company announcing that Cuneiform Records was being retired, which greatly saddened me as they had a tremendous roster of progressive jazz, fusion and rock. Happily, they still have managed to keep things going, which brings this terrific release to us. Janel is a classically trained cellist, and her music is often described as being “genre crossing”, borrowing elements from rock, pop, classical, jazz. I think this is jazz that can appeal to heavy metalheads! Thank goodness for Cunei-

Photo by Littlevillagemf

SAHARA VON HATTENBERGER



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SAHARA VON HATTENBERGER
JOANNE KANG • JIM DOXAS • ADRIAN VEDADY

ODD
SOUND

Sahara Von Hattenberger
“1Q84”
Odd Sound
2024

Another classically trained cellist on this issue’s playlist is Canadian Sahara Von Hattenberger. Her new album, a double CD, is named after the novel by Japanese author Haruki Murakami. On disc 1 she presents a marvelous version of Claude Bolling’s “Suite for Cello and Jazz Piano Trio”, with Adrian Vedady, Joanne Kang and Jim Doxas. But I’m even more enthralled with disc 2, with 4 tracks by other composers, including Kate Bush and Remy Le Boeuf! This album was one of my ‘surprises of the year’ – so good to know about this brilliant young artist!

WOMEN IN JAZZ MEDIA

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BLACK LIVES IN MUSIC

MORE THAN A FEW OF US

Inspired by Willard Jenkins book 'Ain't But A Few of Us', the Women in Jazz Media's new mentoring scheme **More Than A Few of Us** is open for applicants!

Specifically aimed at increasing the number of black jazz journalists across the world and supported by Black Lives in Music, who work to dismantle structural racism in the industry and work to take action to create a level playing field for everyone to have an equal chance to succeed, along with award winning legend Maxine Gordon, the mentoring scheme has significant support, not least of which is through the inspirational mentors who are involved.

More Than A Few of Us is open for applicants!

[To apply, please follow this link](#)

#knockingdownthedoors

**BLACK
LIVES IN
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PHOTO OF CAMILLA GEORGE BY MONIKA S JAKUBOWSKA



ANGIE STONE



Photo by Noboyo