

Cover Photo: Ashaine White by Jonathon Cuff, taken during our EFG London Jazz Festival event at Toulouse Lautrec, London. November 2022.

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Welcome to our December 2022 edition!

In this edition, along with our regular Women in Jazz Media features, we take some time to explore the behind-the-scenes world of women working in the jazz industry.

Isabel Marquez leads a new series 'Behind the Pen' interviewing a wide range of writers to explore their journeys and hopefully encourage new writers. We spend some time with some brilliant photographers from around the world from South Africa and New York to Prague and London and gain some insights into what goes on behind the scenes at Ronnie Scott's. We are also thrilled to be launching our new mentoring scheme specifically created to address the historic lack of black jazz journalists.

Positivity and moving forward is always a theme in our work, but to do so, sometimes uncomfortable conversations must be had, and our magazine is, and always will be, a

platform for voices that feel unheard. In this edition we spend a little time exploring wellbeing and sexual harassment and as always, we welcome conversations and

invite anyone to get in touch with us if you would like to

discuss anything or if you feel your voice is not heard.

To the left, you will see a list of all the women featured in this magazine. Please do explore, support, and share the

incredible work of these women. Thank you to everyone who supports our work. Our goal cannot be
achieved without you. I would also like to take the
opportunity to thank our new sponsor Barnes Code,
for their very generous donation. This new sponsorship presents some great opportunities and will have
a considerable impact on our work.

Fiona Ross

Founder Women in Jazz Media

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JANE CORNWELL LIFE, INSPIRATION AND SALSA

ward winning author, journalist and legend Jane Cornwell is truly an inspiration. Sharing her energy and love of travelling and music with the world through articles in a range of publications including The London Evening Standard, Songlines, Jazzwise, the Australian Financial review; writing press releases, programme notes, compering for festivals and not forgetting her brilliant book 'The Whirl' and so much more.

I often write about how excited, inspired and honoured I am to talk to so many incredible people and talking to Jane was no exception. I have been a huge admirer of her work for many years and was thrilled to be able to spend a little time exploring her incredible career. With so much to discuss, this is the first of a two-part interview, with the second part coming out in the next magazine, on International Women's day, in March.

An obvious place to start, but I asked Jane about her writing journey, reflecting on how she first started to where she is now.

As a kid growing up in the outer suburbs of Melbourne, I just loved to write. Short stories, poems. I won a Writer of the Week ribbon at primary school and got a 100 per cent for English Expression in my final year at high school. But I tried and failed to get a journalism cadetship and did a post graduate degree in anthropology instead. A fellow waitress at the Last Laugh theatre restaurant, an editor at Melbourne newspaper Herald Sun, got me to do a book review of Wade Davis's The Serpent and the Rainbow, and then I started doing the odd bit of literary criticism, and kept up the creative writing. When I moved to the UK in 1988, I flailed around a

bit - I did a lot of unpaid writing for Australian freesheets Southern Cross and TNT, which you used to find at tube stations - before landing a job as press officer at the Institute of Contemporary Arts. Over five years I dealt with a lot of editors and was writing for Australian newspapers about comedy (I'd come over to live with a UK comic) and doing the odd music interview. I interviewed Nick Cave for the Guardian and Bjork for Rolling Stone Australia (an ex-school mate was editor), and heaps of stuff for the Pink Paper (arts editor was a friend) and slowly feathered my nest that way. When I left the ICA (was sort of pushed out, I didn't really do any work), I had this huge knowledge of leftfield music, performance and visual art that still stands me in good stead. I went freelance in 1995 and wrote a lot for Australia, mainly, though was rock critic for the Independent newspaper for a bit.

In 1997 a friend's boyfriend was working at Peter Gabriel's Real World Studios and got me in as a researcher. Marrying rock music and anthropology seemed to fit, and these so-called 'world' artists had way more interesting back stories than your average indie band. I've worked on and off for RW ever since, writing, interviewing; I've hosted the Real World stage at WOMAD for some years now too. I've long been a feature writer and interviewer for Fair fax and (for my sins) News International in Australia. Not long after I started writing for Songlines magazine (I'm now a contributing editor) and eventually became a world music critic at the London Evening Standard.

Through the Standard, though I am not sure



how, I met the irascible Jack Masserik, who while mainly a lover of post-bop and swing got my passion for spiritual jazz and would ask me to review the odd jazz gig. When Jack died in 2014, I wrote his obituary in the Standard - a one pager - after which the arts editor asked me if I'd take over. I was then writing for Jazzwise magazine as well. If I didn't have the technical know-how I figured I knew when music had heart, and I could describe how it made me feel. In 2015 I published a music/travel memoir. The Whirl, with HarperCollins Aus, and 2017/18, I enrolled in a Masters in Global Creative and Cultural Industries at SOAS and did a dissertation on the so called young British jazz scene and tried to push the London jazz community as much as I could in the Standard.

This year I received the All Party Parliamentary Jazz Media Award, which was lovely, It's becoming harder and harder to get coverage for jazz but hey, I'm persevering.

Jane is doing so much more than just persevering, she is leading the way. Winning the All Party Parliamentary Jazz Media Award was not only a significant achievement and well overdue nod for Jane but a powerful moment in the industry, where awards are historically male dominated and even more so in the writing arena. Much to explore here and food for another article, but we discussed some of the barriers faced by jazz journalists and I asked Jane if she had faced any challenges in her work.

Er, yes. Particularly being taken seriously as an older woman and non-jazz musician in a field which is very male, very purist and often ageist. Huge challenges remain in pitching articles to editors on newspapers who simply don't reply, or commission a piece then hang onto it so you're not paid until it runs, or the fact the pay is so low for the effort and you long for a patron or some sort of money spinner. Another challenge, I think, is musicians and some PRs assuming that you have a hotline to editors and just need to ask to get something in the paper; unless it's Jazzwise or Songlines, it can be exhausting putting lots of work into a pitch – specially something

Photo by Lukasz Izdebski



you feel is a gift - then hearing nothing back. So many challenges: juggling a relationship when deadlines wait for no one, or getting back from a gig in the wee hours and having to write a review that will appear in the paper the next day...

This is one of the many things that makes Jane so very inspirational. Despite the challenges of not only being a writer, but a writer in the music industry and being a female writer in the jazz industry, Jane exudes resilience, energy, positivity, and joy in her writing and beyond. But Jane's infectious appeal goes beyond that. For me, it is also the combination of humour, wisdom and honesty. Her book 'The Whirl' - which needs to be shouted about more - is simply brilliant.

It's about female friendship... it's about women that love music and subcultures and rituals. Each chapter is a sort of vignette, stand-alone but you can kind of go into everything from dub and reggae to Sufi music to Cuban music. I'm quite proud of it and it gets better in the second half ... but at the same time it was a really big learning curve. There are smatterings of jazz in there and musical references all the way through and I wanted to sort of try and counter the awareness at the time of all these male authors - the Nick Hornby's and Barney Hoskyns...Men are the ones that are alphabetise their music collections and women, as collectors, are not really celebrated in the same way.

I started talking about the fact that I'm the eldest and I never had a Big Brother or sister to show me the way in terms of what was right, so I would go down to the local record store with my pocket money and flip through the albums and I've got Phoebe Snow and I found Keith Jarrett – and this is as a 13 year old - I'd get home and play this crazy stuff like Keith Jarrett, and be like what is this?! I'm quite proud of it but I would really do it differently now.

I loved the book and the final authors note at the end, for me summarises a lot of Jane's work:



Jane Cornwell

'I wanted to tell stories: my own.
Other people's. Having spent a big
chunk of my career interviewing
celebrities, where often the most
interesting story is the one you
can't tell, I wanted to tell stories
about ordinary people – ordinary, extraordinary people – who
might otherwise be overlooked'

Jane's website lists her interests as 'Live music, yoga, dancing, Cuban salsa, travel, horse riding (in another life she was an amateur show jumper, racehorse trainer and riding school instructor!).' In the second part of this interview, we will explore this along with some of the music that has inspired Jane and more!

To follow and support Jane's work, do visit her website for information and do read the second part of this interview in our next magazine!

Jane Cornwell Website





SARAH WELLER



Photo by Monika S Jakubowska

BEHIND THE SCENES AT RONNIE SCOTT'S WITH SARAH WELLER

about the world-famous Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club since it opened in 1959. An incredibly rich history of legendary performances but also increasingly more recently, providing a platform for contemporary jazz and new artists. As always, at Women in Jazz Media, we like to shine a light on the women working behind the scenes and it was great pleasure to talk to the brilliant Sarah Weller, Music Operations and Programming Manager for Ronnie's about her work, life and musical loves.

Sarah's website states 'Sarah Weller is made up of many parts: DJ, Vintage Habitue, Music lover and all-round jazz, funk and fusion enthusiast'. Having spoken to Sarah, I should also add singer, mother, jazz advocate, homeopath and absolute legend to her fantastic work and life portfolio. Sarah's passion for new music and supporting artists is very clear, as is her love for her work at Ronnie Scott's.

We often wonder how people manage to juggle work and life commitments and with such a range of different hats to wear, we asked Sarah to describe a typical day:

Well, I'll give you an example of today. I got in and I created this thing called 'The Daily Doings' which is something that we circulate internally to inform everyone what is happening on that day - so what time the shows are, who are the engineers, the duty managers, band liaison, who's doing front of house etc. After that I did our second database newsletter for the week which goes out to 160,000 people. I tried to go through as many emails as I could and get ready for our music meeting - we had a music meeting to discuss all current bookings

and things that we want to book. I sent a list to everyone last night to say what I wanted to discuss in this meeting and I've just finished that meeting and now I'm talking to you! We have Mario Biondi in the club tonight, so I will also watch that tonight and I'll just probably respond to all the things in our music meeting but that's a fairly typical day.

We were very glad to hear that Sarah does get to enjoy the incredible music at Ronnie's, as often all the work behind the scenes leads to little time to actually sit and enjoy.

I do try and watch everything if I'm around, so for instance last week was London Jazz Festival and I came into work on the Sunday to watch Ivo Neame and then stayed all week until Saturday. That's exceptional because my children are still young and I do two days at home and three days here in the office but I do try and watch everything.

As with many women, Sarah talks of her busy schedule of work, children and more without truly realising how inspirational that actually is – and how inspirational she is.

Having previously worked at Jazz FM, Sarah clearly thrives in exciting music led environments.

I worked at Jazz FM for just over five years, when Simon Cooke headed up Jazz Enterprises. We launched Hed Kandi and that did very well and it was a good time for compilation albums - they go through their phases - and it was just the right product at the right time. Then we developed the Jazz FM label further and then as it grew, more people came on board and it was an exciting thing to be part of and of course, I loved being part



of Jazz FM and it was a really good time. Simon started working at Ronnie's in 2008 and he contacted me said I think I've got a job for you, so of course I absolutely jumped at the chance! I started off part time, May 2009, because my kids were very young, and also I moved to Herne Bay from London and then I went to three days and then I went full time.

We asked Sarah if she felt prepared for her new role, moving from the Jazz FM family, to Ronnie's and also her experience working as one of the few female decision makers at Ronnie's.

Well, I think every industry has its own language, its own knowledge and I felt like my jazz knowledge was pretty good because I've always listened to jazz, especially working at Jazz FM for a long time. I sang jazz too but you know, we are always learning, so there's

always new artists to discover and I love learning and broadening my knowledge, so for me, going and meeting people, I love it all!

The first job I had was PWL records, which I joined at a time when Warner's had taken over Pete Waterman's company. I started as a PA for the MD and there were quite a few females in the team, but I've always worked in the music industry, so it's always been very male dominated. For me it was very normal, but I would say that in terms of the team at Ronnie's, there's me but there are other women in the team - Manuella is the senior duty manager, Kate, the box office supervisor, Kristina is head of front of house and Zivile the finance manager. Fred Nash, the managing director has been around forever but he absolutely sees the value in women and he's very encouraging of women at Ronnie Scott's. But you know, I've always been very opinionated and my voice is heard.

Ronnie's is often voted the 'best jazz club in the world' and with its incredibly rich history and reputation, and we chatted about how they protect the legacy but also welcome in new, contemporary jazz.

I think you just have to be open. You have to look at your programme as a whole and try to be balanced and be an open place for all genres of jazz. We obviously will all have our favourites and we all have music that we prefer, but Paul (Paul Pace, Music Bookings Co-ordinator) and I, we like all types of music so in a way quite open minded.

But you do obviously, also have to sell tickets and ensure revenue. So how do you balance this?

I think it's just about striking the right balance and I believe it's so important to keep moving forward with the genre and we have to be as open as we can. Audiences are changing all the time and I think you have to think about your audience as well as the artists and I know that for certain acts, it's going to be a certain audience and for another act there's going to be a different audience. We want to show that Ronnie's is a place for anyone that has an interest in jazz and that it's not scary music! It's all about being open and just trying to be all-encompassing.

When Fred became MD in 2020, he wanted to improve the Late Late shows and encourage a new audience so Wednesday and Thursday late shows have rotating leaders and hosts, and they invite up guests to jam. Friday and Saturday are more groove based - but it's cheaper, it's very relaxed and so it's a good way to be introduced to jazz in an easy-going, late-night hang type of way. So, the late shows have been very good for introducing new acts and we're really pleased with how they have gone. Lockdown and the livestreams were very good for booking UK artists and for me this was a big positive that came out of lockdown, seeing the wonderful music here in the UK.

Playing at Ronnie's Scott's is the ultimate dream for many artists and we asked Sarah if she could shed some light on the selection process and if she had any advice. It's very much a team decision so if an artist wants to play, it's not one person that necessarily makes that decision. That's exactly what we discuss in our music team meetings. So for instance, if there's a new project that I would like to present, I would bring it up and play it to everyone, talk about who's in the band and discuss if it would work here. Some things work and some things don't move forward but we try to be as open as possible. We are also lucky enough to have a large membership that we stay in contact with and they're very supportive of the music and of the club.

Big bands have become very popular and they sell very well down here. We had Nikki Iles big band and she sold out and we were very happy about that and we have Georgina Jackson and Emma Smith's big band coming in February and I'm talking to other big band leaders. I think there are lots of people that are very keen on big band music and there's an audience for it and it's just fantastic to be able to showcase all these big bands.

We wanted to end the interview with Sarah, exploring more of her work as a singer and a DJ and especially as she said 'when you're a singer always a singer'. Her own vocal work has taken a slight back seat – although do check out the brilliant Sarah Weller Band album 'Stormy' – and Sarah explained that she is a strong believer in prioritising and her own music just hasn't been the focus recently, by her own choice.

I love discovering new music and I love DJing for that reason and I am lucky enough to DJ once a month downstairs at Ronnie's. If my music is not part of that mix then I accept that because my role at Ronnie's is my priority and where else could I possibly want to be?

Sarah Weller Website

Ronnie Scott's Website









BEHIND THE PEN: A WRITER'S JOURNEY



THE WOMEN TRANSFORMING JAZZ JOURNALISM

BY ISABEL MARQUEZ

hroughout history, a gender struggle has been present not only among performers in the jazz genre but those working in the surrounding media industries. The world of jazz journalism has always been a competitive struggle, with this struggle being somewhat emphasised by the gender disparity which has divided the genre for so many years. Women in Jazz Media wanted to open up a discussion for women working in jazz journalism and writing fields, to get a further understanding of how they navigated the industry and found success in telling the stories they wanted to tell. We wish to shine a light on the reasons for pursuing a career in writing, as well as the distinct challenges that may appear along the way. Hopefully, through the wonderful experiences and advice of these inspirational female writers, many will feel motivated to begin their own writing journey.

Each individual interview will also be posted in full on Jazz in Europe, in our new writer's series Behind the Pen: A Writer's Journey With...

Paulette Jackson is a published author, the founder and CEO of Jazz Zone Radio, and host of 'The Classic Soul Music Café radio show. She also works as a regular songwriter for ASCAP.

Sandra Booker is now a contributing writer for Women in Jazz Media, following various productions and writing projects, including The Jazz Mill Podcast on BlogTalkRadio, the Transgenre Music Nonbinary for artists and creatives which blurs the lines of musical genres, 'She Can Be Evil- A Survivor's Story' which was written, produced, and performed by Sandra Booker, to name a few.

Lara Eidi has built a career from primarily being a singer-songwriter, however, she is also

the Jazz Editor and Senior Contributor for the music publication Backseat Mafia (UK). She is also a frequent contributor to the Women in Jazz Media column in Jazz in Europe, covering a range of genres from folk to jazz.

Fiona Ross is a renowned jazz performer, founder of Women in Jazz Media and a free-lance journalist, writing for Kind of Jazz, Jazz North, The Jazz UK, and Connects Music. She was a guest editor-in-chief for the January 2021 edition of Jazz Quarterly and is a senior writer for Jazz in Europe.

Hilary Seabrook is a freelance writer and journalist, writing for publications including Kind of Jazz. She was also a radio presenter for North Herts Radio and recently started her own podcast called Harmonious World, which chats to musicians and explores various musical genres.

Jane Cornwell writes for various major newspapers and online platforms in the UK and Australia. She is a Jazz and World Music Critic for the London Evening Standard, the Contributing Editor for Songlines Magazine and a frequent onstage interviewer at festivals including WOMAD and the EFG London Jazz Festival. In July 2022, she won the Jazz Media Award at the Parliamentary Jazz Media Awards, for all her work in jazz journalism.

Jordannah Elizabeth's writing, lectures and commentary have been featured in Hearst Magazines, BBC 2, NPR Music, Downbeat Magazine, and MTV World. She has been a regular entertainment journalist for New York Amsterdam News since 2013 and a publishing author, with several books to her name. Elizabeth is also the founder of the literary organisation Publik.

HOW DID YOU BEGIN YOUR WRITING JOURNEY?

SANDRA BOOKER-

I began writing as a child in grade school. My primary motivation was to document the tall tales my maternal grandmother passed on to my siblings and me... When Covid-19 morphed into a global pandemic... it was an incredible gift of time... I immersed myself in online writing courses and hours of interruption-free reading... My solo show, 'She Can Be Evil- a Survivors Story' premiered in September 2021, highlighting intimate partner sexual abuse and the demonization of the victim for coming forward... My most recent essay, 'The Untethered Tongue: Lifting the Black Feminine Voice in Jazz' will be published on AAIHS in December 2022.

LARA EIDI.

I started writing as soon as I learned to play the piano... I had written lots of short stories and poems (and most of them turned into songs) ... I reached out to a Bristol-based publication called 'Backseat Mafia' and asked if they needed writers for reviews, interviews etc. They sent me a resounding yes and since then I have been freelancing for them as Jazz and Folk Senior editor, and later as a freelancer for Women in Jazz Media and now London Jazz News.

FLAM MACTAGGART:

After a 30+ year career in medicine, in 2015 I applied for a place on a jazz journalism course, The Write Stuff, run by Serious and Jazzwise. I wrote my first-ever review of a Sun Ra Arkestra gig at Edinburgh's Summerhall... Somehow, I felt completely certain I would secure a place on the course and in fact, I did! I learnt from established jazz writers such as Kevin le Gendre, Jon Newey, and Mike Flynn. After this, I founded the Scottish Jazz Space website where I was determined to share my enthusiasm for music.

FIONA ROSS:

What was really wonderful for me, was it came to me through my music, no recommendations, no previous writing examples, just my music.

I had just released my second album, 'Just Me (and sometimes someone else)' and I was contacted by Nigel J Farmer, the editor of Jazz in Europe as he was writing a review of it. He had been following my music and asked if I would be interested in writing for them as he was wanting to expand their writing team. He also suggested I think about joining the Jazz Journalists Association for support and networking. This was the beginning of what has been and still is a wonderful journey.

DID YOU HAVE ANY SUPPORT ALONG THE WAY AND IF SO, ANYONE YOU WOULD LIKE TO THANK OR HIGHLIGHT?

SANDRA BOOKER:

Regrettably, I didn't receive much support for my writing because, as a younger person, I mainly kept it to myself. My stories became a private collection of ideas, thoughts, and aspirations kept to myself until some years ago, my best friend from kindergarten began recalling the stories I often made up to entertain ourselves. Katanya Berger-Ganier has been my best friend since the age of 5. She has been my ardent advocate, whether as a singer, performer, or playwright and her encouragement and joy for my successes, great or small, are unwavering. After what felt like a lifetime from improving my craft.... In doing so, I started sharing my stories with others, which has been a wonderful experience.

PAULETTE JACKSON:

I definitely have had so much support since the beginning of this writing journey. I told no one I was going to write a book except one person and that was one of my inspirations for getting started and that was my dear friend William "Spanky" Montoya. We have been the best of friends for over 35 years and he along with others since my first release, has been so supportive on this writing journey with me.

FIONA MACTAGGART:

The Serious/Jazzwise Jazz journalism course in 2015 was very helpful in encouraging me to write. I note that nowadays it makes explicit that it is just for younger applicants so if I had applied this year I would not have been considered.

Local Jazz journalists here in Scotland have been very friendly and open in giving me advice, notably Rob Adams. Last year I joined the Committee of the award-winning Women in Jazz Media (WiJM) and am in their Writers and Wellbeing groups. The dynamic WiJM founder, Fiona Ross was very supportive and offered me mentorship, and she continues to offer widespread and important support to women in Jazz journalism through her WiJM work.

HILARY SEABROOK:

I have met some amazing people along my path as a sax player and a writer and they have all played their part in making me the musician and writer I am today. Mike O'Neill (a bandleader in Hertfordshire) gave me the first chances to discover jazz. He was followed by Bill Ashton - NYJO was a great place of learning, and I met so many people I still consider friends. Work with Paul Weller taught me lots about the business of the wider music industry and many of the musicians I worked with then are still an inspiration today. I wish someone had taken me under their wing when I started writing - I know I had a lot to offer in terms of understanding music and using words.





ANY WORDS OF WISDOM OR GUIDANCE FOR ANYONE CONSIDERING WRITING?

PAULETTE JACKSON:

Yes, it is never too late to live out your dreams. If writing and sharing stories have been a passion of yours, then by all means do it. It may be challenging but, the reward of seeing your works published and being able to share that with others is a feeling you will never forget. I think more importantly, you would've accomplished a goal, a dream that no one can take away from you. Be the creative spirit you were meant to be. Put in the work and the rewards will be worth it. Do as much research as you can and just write. Find what best fits your style.

SANDRA BOOKER:

Writing is a crucial component of self-expression and a vital tool for exchanging ideas. I took to heart the importance of good penmanship and incorporated that into my arsenal of storytelling tools. Unlike other professional pursuits, writing is not gender, race, age, or religion specific. One's economic background offers no preference for the privileged over the impoverished. Instead, you must have a story and a burning desire to tell it. My advice is simple: write! Write honestly, fearlessly, and lovingly, but share your stories and let the truth fall where it may.

LARA EIDI:

Yes. Same advice I have for music: write from the heart. Write what you know, and if you don't know, go, and find out. Write in the moment, leave it alone, then edit. Trust your voice and seek out the help of those who support you. Read things written by writers you like, or artists you admire, they too have a lot of wonderfully crafted interviews and stories to inspire you. Don't forget, ultimately, that writing is synonymous with storytelling. And everyone LOVES stories.

JANE CORNWELL:

Persevere, network. Believe your worth but do write for free early on, just to get the by-lines going and the paid work evolving. Find a passion and specialise; world music and jazz are mine, though I can't live on what I earn from writing about them – I do arts and travel writing, press release writing and compering too. Crossing platforms is essential; today writing is just one skill of many needed to make a career.

JORDANNAH ELIZABETH:

Don't write for money. Write because it's the only thing that you want to do, every day, all day. If you want to be a writer, make it a part of your life. Write in journals, read, and study articles, write short stories, and art and music criticism. The most important thing is to have samples. You must have pieces of writing for an editor to read so they understand your style and what assignments would be good for you. Also, research journalism and working with an editor. Study how to write a pitch. Editors are going to need strong pitches and samples. Structure those and then start reaching to editors. Resources in universities are helpful. But you know, I just started my own blog and created a following so publications were able to hire me with confidence.

FIONA MACTAGGART:

Hilary Seabrook

There is a major under-investment in jazz journalism, at least as serious if not more so than in many other forms of The Arts. Consequently, it is likely to be difficult to make a decent living from this alone. So, I would suggest having a back-up income generator! Having said that, if you have a burning passion for either writing or about the subject you are writing about, or both, I suggest - go for it! We probably all only live once, so seize the day! The more people writing about or otherwise supporting Jazz, each in our individual ways, the more likely the word is to get out there about how fantastic Jazz is!

I would also advise finding both a peer group and a mentor. Both will feel encouraging and supportive, will promote your mental health and you will learn a lot from each other.

Finding a career in jazz journalism may be difficult in this age of growing digitalisation, but it's not at all impossible. Organisations like Women in Jazz Media are dedicated to helping aspiring journalists find their way and their own stories. If this article has spoken to you please do get in touch. Thank you to all the writers invovled in this series. To find out more about their work please click below: Sandra Booker Jane Cornwell Lara Eidi Jordannah Elizabeth Paulette Jackson Fiona Mactaggart Fiona Ross

The full series is being published on the Women in Jazz Media column, on Jazz in Europe, with the first article talng to Paulette Jackson.

Click here to read: Behind The Pen with Paulette Jackson

ISABEL MARQUEZ

After graduating from Cardiff University with a BA in Music, I joined the Women in Jazz Media team and began my journalism journey. Since then I have written for various jazz (and other genre based) magazines, and have collaborated with some incredible people.

With the Cardiff University Jazz Society, I set up the university's first all-female jazz group: 'Womxn's Group'. I also was the society's Musical Director at the North Sea Jazz Festival, leading the big band on the Mississippi Stage.

I am a saxophonist and singer who releases music that combines features of jazz with folky and alternative sounds.

My work with Women in Jazz Media has helped me understand further what needs to be done to make the jazz genre more egalitarian, something I focus on in my writing.

Click here for Isabel Marquez's portfolio











BEHIND THE SCENES: THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Tomen in Jazz Media has and continues to spotlight and uplift the work of women and non-binary individuals in various creative industries, including jazz photography. Parallel to the jazz scene as a whole, women have found it difficult to secure their place as professionals within the jazz photography sector. However, along with the musical trends in jazz, things are beginning to improve. We are seeing many more inspiring female photographers come into their own, in what once was an incredibly male-dominated industry. We spoke to several women from around the globe, who are transforming the jazz photography scene as we know it: Enid Farber, Barka Fabianova and Vuyo Giba (along with additional photos by Tatiana Gorilovsky and Monika S. Jakubowska).

We hope that their experiences and creative drive will motivate others to 'capture the moment' through their own individual lens...

VUYO GIBA

Vuyo Giba is based in Johannesburg, South Africa and is a self-trained photographer who uses music as an inspiration for her creativity. Giba fell in love with jazz music after moving to Johannesburg, and it subsequently paved the way for her photography career. She has been instrumental in capturing prominent moments from within the South African jazz scene, and across the continent as a whole.

BARKA FABIANOVA

Based in Prague, Barka Fabianova specialises in concert photography, where she has captured hundreds of events and festivals. She enjoys working at small club events to large stages, focussing on the connection formed between the performer and audience. Fabianova's work has been published in various magazines including, Fullmoonzine, Headliner, Huffington Post, and the NY Times, as well as used for promotional work and CD covers. One of her photos became one of the 30 finalists in Jazz World Photo 2015, a global competition for jazz photographers.







Can you tell us how you first became a photographer?

It started in PE, the year was 2012 when I was on a transfer from Johannesburg for work, I was invited by a friend to the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum that hosted Madosini and Pedro. I had never seen her before. As we were seated inside the museum, she appeared in her Xhosa attire, beaded from head to feet, she wore on her head a big beautifully beaded black head wrap. She looked like a walking wisdom.

I remember during the performance, I felt so at peace inside that space and wished I could tell why. I knew it had to do with the where I was and what I was seeing. The stage, the indigenous instruments uhadi and umrhubhe, the shakers and the emotions displayed.

From that day on I wanted to be a photographer. When I got to Jhb a month after, I bought my first kit and a second hand shop and it was a bargain, with that came 2 different lenses, a charger, a body and a camera bag. I visited the Market Theatre for a show, at the end of the show, I heard from a near distance a robust yet smooth sound of a saxophone, I followed the music and found it to be at Niki's Jazz Oasis, a club that was established in 1995. I had been travelling with my camera for that few days, when I got to the place, there was a cover charge of R120, money I didn't have. I negotiated with the co owner upon noticing that there was no photographer and he was using his cellphone to capture the show that, if he let me capture for him and have the photos delivered to him the Monday I would gladly help. He agreed, and just like that I was at the heart of South African jazz pioneers.

Did you have any mentors or role models that you would like to share with us? Any photographers that have inspired you?

Well, there are few mentors that shaped my eye, however; the music for me played a huge role. I fell at the heart of jazz music not knowing who and what jazz music was. It meant that I looked forward to every weekend. I had now reached an agreement with the owner Simnikiwe Sondlo to be a resident photographer. She played the most important and crucial part in my life as far as music and photography is concerned.

Also, as for photographers... I remember going through a catalogue I had found at my then employer. There was this beautiful stage capture that captured my soul, it was the works of the late Pierre Crocquet. I went researched about him and found that he had passed on tragically. I kept in contact with his brother. He is responsible for Pierre's works currently.

South Africa has a beautifully reach musical legacy – but how did music become part of your life as a photographer?

Remember I did mention that the venue itself was established in 1995 and hosted the finest Mzantsi jazz musicians, both young and old. The music was always too rich. It took me knowing each band member of each band and their music. I was always keen to learn.

I grew fond of a lot of musicians; however I had identified certain musicians that I wished to follow, such as Bab'Bheki Khoza, Bra Feya Faku, Bra Andile Yenana, Bra Stompie Manana, Bra Sydney Mnisi, Bra Lex Futshane to name a few; the reason for that will always remain unanswered as to "Was it their music that touched me, the conversation we always had or their stage presence that was the cutting edge. I remember there were times it would feel so unreal that I was right at the heart of South African jazz music. For that I am always grateful to the awe the music, the love that sparkles all round makes us all one.

The most remarkable memory of how my photos have told a story was, when on stage at Niki's, it hosted the above mentioned masters on one stage, all of them were wearing short sleeve shirts and t-shirts..:-). Haha, that was quite fun to discuss with them. They never truly went on stage wearing short sleeves, I was told jazz is about presentation too.

One last story; One evening, I got back from my day job, and got ready for my residency at Niki's. It was a very hot summer evening. I set out my cute outfit for the night. It was torn denim shorts and a blazer. After a





tedious process of getting dressed, I left my house and when I got downstairs our building, my conscious spoke to me, I asked myself if I had ever seen anyone wearing shorts on stage...and the answer was ofcourse a no. I went back to my house and got on a more proper outfit. And man, this was my story at the dinner table.

Haha

What is the music scene like in South Africa? And within that, how does jazz fit in there?

In South Africa, we have a very vibrant music scene and many different genres. All of them are equally popular within their respected societies. Jazz however is a niche genre and remains influential in terms of music, such as beats, hip hop, amapiano etc, Like all these other genres, jazz has all the elements. Melody, harmony, rhythm and most importantly improvisation, which makes it so special.

One can argue the idea that jazz is dead and unmarketable, because it is such a niche genre and that's what makes jazz special.

How is it for you working as a photographer? Are they many photographers? Many working in the music scene in South Africa? Any challenges?

Photography is a male dominated space in South Africa. This automatically puts me, a female at a position where I am still assumed to be male, to those that have never met me, those that I approach for business, perhaps on email or any form of written communication. Also the fact that I do not watermark my images, people have found my work to be masculine.

This puts you at a position where you constantly have to prove yourself. However; I have met beautiful male photographers that I look up to, that inspire me and I learn a lot from them. I like that. I like learning. I love learners.

I also have been very inspired by female photographers, just how bold these beautiful women are. The beautiful stories they tell makes me want to be a better person, everyday...Other than that, anyone can carry a camera, the story is in the heart. Everyone has a story to tell.

Do you know many female photographers?

Yes, a few contemporary photographers. Mandisa Buthelezi, Neo Ntsoma, Jazz photographer: Lerato Phakade

If someone didn't know what a photographer was, how would you describe what you do?

A storyteller, a moment capturer; I truly don't know. I always tell people that I tell jazz stories, on and off stage. I talk about the education and the love I have experienced. I talk about the music, I talk about the social injustices of the music.

To support Vuya's work, you can find her on:

Facebook

Instagram

You can also view our video of her work with brilliant music from Joy Ellis:















Omagugu Makhathini by Vuyo Giba

Celebrating Women In Jazz An initiation put together by 4Ever Jazz, hosted by Nothemba Madumo





Nomfundo Xaluva by Vuyo Giba

Celebrating Jazz Queens.





Omagugu Makhathini by Vuyo Giba

Celebrating Women In Jazz





BARKA FABIANOVA

Photo by Ioanna Taut

Can you tell us how you first became a photographer?

I would call myself a freelance photographer. I have loved art since high school, but I was not much into photography.

In high school, I had a great art history teacher. Her lectures about the history of art were funny, and I learned a lot about different periods of history. After high school I studied Art Management at Higher Technical School of Information Services in Prague. We used to visit a lot of exhibitions, learned a lot about all forms of art. And in those times I began to love photography.

I started taking photos in my late 20's, first ex-

I started taking photos in my late 20's, first experimenting mainly with landscape photography. But I was too lazy to get up early to catch the sunrise, so I decided to become a concert photographer.

Did you have any mentors or role models that you would like to share with us? Any photographers that have inspired you?

I really love jazz portraits taken by Herman Leonard, Carol Friedman, Guy Le Querrec. It's not easy to select just a few of them, because there are a lot of photographers that inspire me. Another inspiring person is Anna Mašátová, who happens to be my good friend. She is a freelance music journalist, PR specialist, and a person who has helped to change the Czech music scene in the last decade.

Czech Republic has a beautifully rich musical legacy – but how did music become part of your life as a photographer?

I cannot imagine a day without music. I listen to a lot of music, always exploring new artists. I play a diatonic accordion (melodeon), I used to sing in a choir when I was child. So music has always been part of my life. People often ask me if I am able to enjoy music while taking pictures. And I say YES. When I'm taking pictures, I feel the connection between me, the audience, and the musicians. And I love that.

What is the music scene like in Prague? And within that, how does jazz fit in there?

The music scene in Prague is quite rich. Lots of

concerts every day, various festivals throughout the year. Jazz fits in here very well, there are several jazz clubs downtown. But I think the jazz scene changed a lot with the birth of Jazz Dock. It's a venue on the bank of the Vltava river, and from there you can also watch boats on the river and the reflections on the water, the surroundings are just beautiful. There are live shows almost every day and a lot of great musicians play there. I would like to mention music agency P&J and their Jazz Meets World series. Petr Pylypov has a great taste in music and he brings a lot of interesting artists to Prague.

How is life for you working as a photographer? Are there many photographers, many female photographers that you know, a community? Any challenges?

A community of photographers is large. I know mostly jazz and world music photographers, and I can say we are friends, meeting regularly on summer festivals, traveling together. There are more male photographers, but it is slowly changing. Of the female Czech photographers I would like to mention Yvett Stránská, my friend and travel buddy. We go together to Festival Rudolstadt in Germany and to Folk Holidays in Náměšt'. There is a nice community of female photographers in Full Moon Magazine. I know most from Czech jazz (and world music) photographers and yes men are more competitive and they want more action, but I can say we are friends and I like most of them and their work.

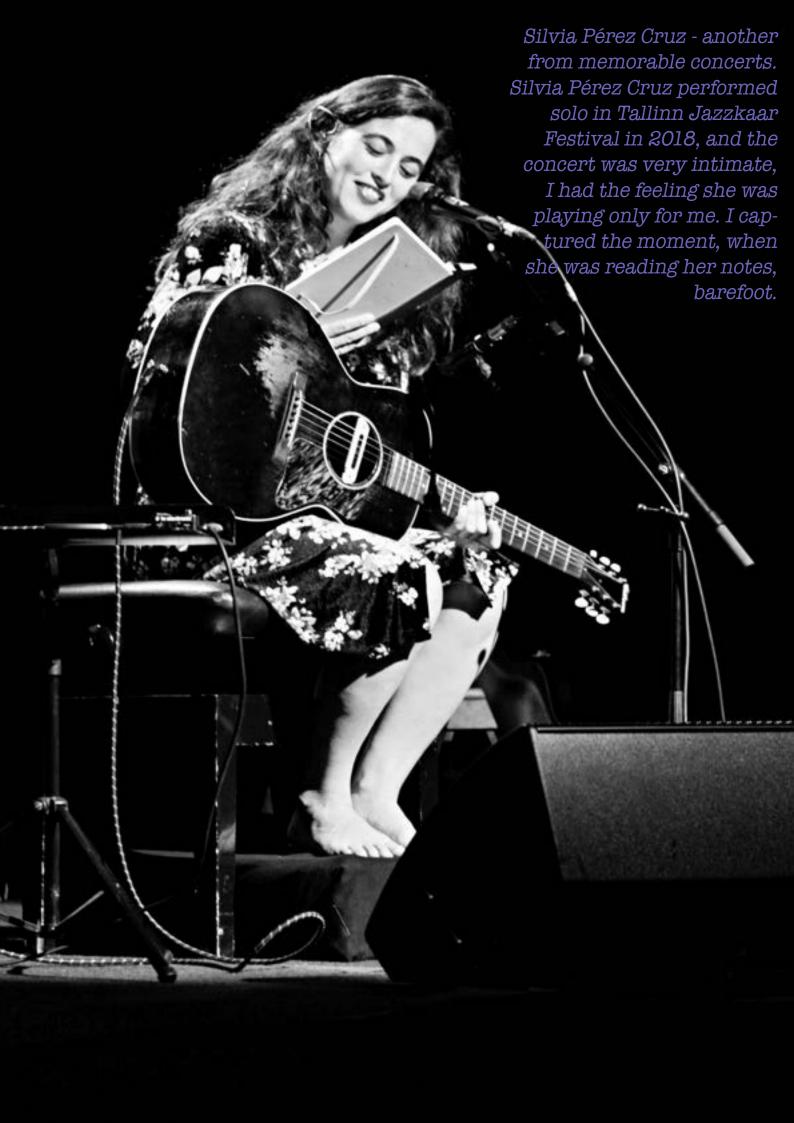
On your website, you state 'I'm trying to capture atmosphere, emotions, and connection between stage and audience.' Can you talk us through how you do that?

I'm a highly sensitive person, so I can feel music, and also emotions of people, so the atmosphere is very important to me. I don't like crowded and noisy places. I'm looking for venues with genius loci, where music is at the first place, people are listening carefully, and you can feel the intimate atmosphere. Sometimes I like to just watch the audience and their reactions to musicians. For me emotion in music is more important than action.

Lina Rodrigues - Portugal singer of fado. This photo was taken at my favorite festival Folk Holidays in Namest nad Oslavou (CZ). Lina is beautiful, but this photo is more about her inner beauty



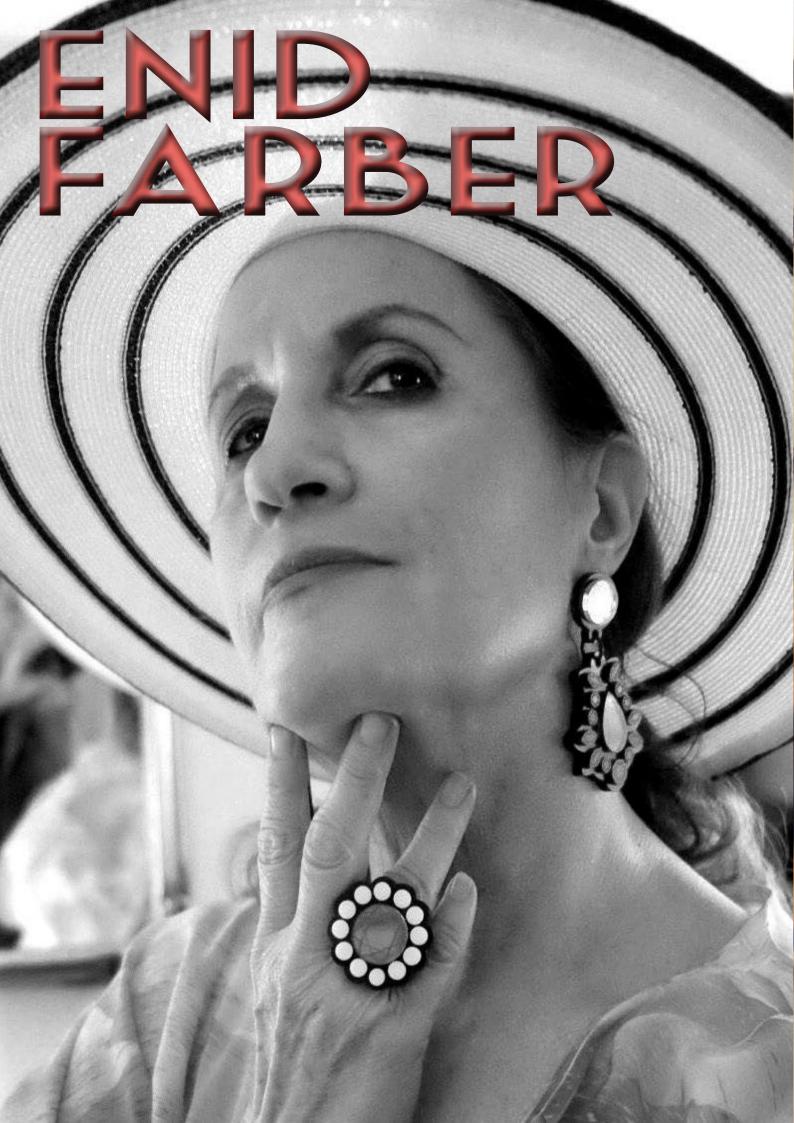






To explore more of Barka's work please do visit her website:

Barka Fabianova website







Nina Simone, "Nina in Academia", Hunter College, NYC 1985

1985, the year I moved el norte, 35 years ago, from the south and couldn't get enough of what I had dreamed about since I shot my first jazz concert, Phil Woods, in Tampa, Florida in 1978. Nina Simone, performing in a college auditorium, so not grand enough for her and certainly not made for a queen. But I lucked out and received press credentials and felt like I had conquered NYC, after a very short time. But alas, the struggle was just unfolding, the dreams a mix of fantasy and abject nightmares. Yet, I persisted, I continued, I learned, I failed, I fought, I gave up, and I am here, still...



I had been shooting semi-professionally for only five years. I shared a few of my early images with the Atlanta local arts and entertainment weekly, Creative Loafing, hoping to get assignments or just on the press list so that I could photograph my music heroes and sheroes. I shot on spec and they paid \$10 a photo. I was content with that, as long it covered my film and chemicals for processing and printing the photos in my makeshift bathroom, kitchen or bedroom darkrooms. It was through grit and determination, mixed with a healthy fear of the prospect of NOT being able to continue saying, "I'm a photographer", that enabled me to carry on.







ENID FARBER DANCING WITH MAGIC

nid Farber is incredible. Considered one of the world's top jazz photographers, her work has been featured in The Jazz Times, Jazziz, The New York Times, Downbeat, Photo Insider and more. She has been nominated four times for the Jazz Journalist Association's Excellence in Jazz photography award and her images were used in the Ken Burns infamous jazz documentary where he said Enid was 'one of the finest jazz art photographers in the country'. The database on her site shows over 300 artists that she has worked with including Geri Allen, Tony Bennett, Miles Davis, Betty Carter, Alice Coltrane, Ella, Dizzy, Bob Marley, Nina Simone, Sarah Vaughan...the list truly goes on. (Click here to view the database)

Talking to Enid, it was very clear to me what an inspirational woman she is. Her love for her work, her kindness and joy and her transparency shine through. It surprised me to see that many people are unaware of Enid's work and celebrating her incredible career, so far, is well overdue.

We started at the beginning:

I grew up with a love of writing and I really thought I wanted to be a writer, but I didn't cultivate it into a career – but I do love words. As a kid I had a typical instamatic camera and I used to take a lot of photos. My cousin is Robert Farber, he's very successful, beautiful shots and I did follow him, but I always loved cameras. I ended up living in Atlanta and when my mother was robbed, they had some cameras stolen and with the money for the insurance they bought me one which ended up being my first camera and so I just started taking pictures of everything.

I ended up moving to Florida for about a year - and this is the most important part - I moved to Florida because I wanted to explore a different world. I went down to Key West, fell in love with it, tried to live there, but that didn't work out and I ended up in Sarasota. Right away I met someone in the health food store wearing a Bob Marley T-shirt. His roommate was a photographer, and another roommate was jazz DJ Bob Seymour. They had a little darkroom in their bathroom - these guys living in a little shack off the beach, and I would go in, sit on the toilet while Andy was printing, watching

and eventually he'd go to bed and say, kiddo it's all yours. So, I just started taking photos and printing. Bob the DJ brought me to a concert in Tampa to see the great Phil Woods and that was the first music concert I ever shot.

Was that the moment when you realised you wanted to be a photographer?

It was more than that moment. The moment was in the darkroom when I was printing, and I turned on the light and Palmetto bugs were scampering everywhere... the magic of printing... the magic of seeing what I shot...

And your career pretty much took off from that point, didn't it?

I ended up back in Atlanta to photograph Bob Marley pretty quickly as I had met his keyboard player many years ago when I was 16 in Jamaica with my mom and her friends. I started working for this little weekly newspaper, one of those arts weeklies and I would go out and shoot and they'd pay me \$10 to print a photo. I just wanted access so every jazz, reggae, African music, concert that landed, that's what I asked to go shoot, nothing else.

Initially working in a darkroom for a photographer who specialised in painting over portrait photos, Enid began to develop her skills in hand colouring by shooting in black and white and then hand colouring which was also due to colour film being too expensive at this time. It wasn't long before New York was calling.

I always wanted to live in New York and if I was going to really immerse myself in jazz, jazz music and photography, I would have to live in the greatest city in the world!

When I first moved here, I lived in Jersey City but I wanted to live in Manhattan and I finally moved in with two guys. I was never privileged enough to have my own beautiful darkroom and with the places I've lived, I had a darkroom in my bedroom, darkroom in the bathroom, darkroom! I

wherever I could set up a darkroom! I would go and see photographers in Manhattan, and they had money and these luxurious beautiful dark rooms. I was always envious, but I just said, you know, I don't have these things, but I always found a way and I'm proud of that.

When you first moved to New York was it everything you expected and wanted it to be?

Everything except, well, I was young, and I still had a lot to learn. I was biking everywhere with my equipment on my bike, so coming home all hours of the night from all over the city. But I didn't feel like I was accepted to the level that I wanted to be. I felt that I didn't have any of the advantages some had. I didn't have a nice studio where I could have people come over and do magazine covers or portraits and I didn't have the best equipment. I met the great Jim Marshall and he said, just do what you do best... don't try to do what everyone else is doing. He was such a great photojournalist and that is what I consider myself, a music photojournalist.

Enid and I spoke for quite some time about life in New York as a photographer and it was clear that Enid didn't feel hugely supported in many ways, which saddened me greatly.

Some of it was, you know born with a silver spoon in your mouth, some of it was gender - very much. Men would be like 'wait a minute, who are you and why are you here?' and it is like this boy's club. A lot of women didn't have that experience and they are absolutely doing beautifully. I remember a woman music photographer said she didn't hire women, only male assistants because they are more technical and are stronger. But you know, I just followed the advice of Jim Marshall who said, just go with your strengths and don't worry about all the other stuff. I worked as an assistant for Jill Krementz once, the writer and photographer married to Kurt Vonnegut and that was really interesting. Richard Avedon, the great photographer had a studio in an apartment on my block and I would have loved to have gone there and said, hey would you look at my work... but I just lost confidence or something...I've never been good about dealing with these powerful men. This lack of confidence in some ways actually empowered Enid to go back into education and at the age of 45 she attended college and achieved a degree.

I just wanted a college degree! I didn't need to learn anything about photography as I was totally self-taught, but I wrote essays on everything from the digital darkroom to the conventional darkroom to hand colouring to music photography, the business of photography... and I got a degree!

There is so much to explore with Enid – her work is simply stunning and her experiences so rich and interesting to anyone interested in photography. But for now, I asked Enid one final question.

If someone was describing you and your work to someone who had not heard of you, what would you hope they would say?

That is a great question! You know I think people do say that when I shoot them, they really have fun. When I shoot people, they say they love my warmth and my exuberance you know? They say I make them feel really good, relaxed and they can let their guard down. I'm so open and so I bring up a lot of personality to the photos and that I do pride myself on. I bring my personality. I get excited, like a little kid. It's always been about the personality and your impulse...being quick and being facile and being able to see a frame and capture it. There's a dance going on that's what I do.

I dance when I take photos.

Cassandra Wilson, JVC Jazz Festival, Carnegie Hall, NYC 2006

Always a major press event, those with general credentials and specialists like myself with music publication credentials, the JVC Jazz Festival is the place to be and be seen and be seeing! I never felt right or confident to request press passes if I didn't have an actual promised assignment but many times, I took deep breaths and nervously asked the powers that be to please put me on the list so I could continue to create and grow my life's work. It was so uncomfortable and still is, but without that access, and the belief that I could and would capture moments, decisive, Cartier Bresson moments, none of the history that is my ultimate motivation, would be recorded. For better or for worse. I've never counted how much I would profit, as my main mission for doing what I think I was meant to do, during these last 44 years. But with that said, I'm aware that I should have been more concerned with the financials as well. I was naïve in my dedication to the art of photography and passion for the music. It's hard to sustain when you've never gotten ahead and are always coming from behind. But I am quite proud that I have created a sweeping body of work that will surpass my allotted time and I still maintain some hope that things will improve and my struggles will be fully rewarded.

To explore more of Enid's work please do visit her website:

Enid Farber website



Lakecia Benjamin and Jazzmeia Horn, Charlie Parker Jazz Festival, Tompkins Square Park, NYC 2019 I shot this photo at the 2019 yearly Charlie Parker Jazz Festival. I'm choosing this one as part of the final selections for a few reasons. First and mostly because I feel it captures their rising star power and a beautiful moment of sisterhood and kinship. But also because it is emblematic of the somewhat shaky ground I walk on in these NYC festival situations. I've always wanted to find my own angle and not crowd the stage with the pack of photographers who all want to be right under and at the stage. So I planted myself much further back and was able to capture this interaction. Maybe it's me, maybe it's them, maybe no one is really paying attention to anything except for competing for the best shot, but I've always felt that I wasn't completely welcome in the pack of mostly men pushing their way in front of everyone including the audience.









Terri-Lyne Carrington & Andrew Cyrille

© 1990 Enid Farber Fotos











SANDRA BOOKER

SINGER/SONGWRITER/ACTRESS/ ACTIVIST/PLAYWRIGHT

I first met Sandra Booker online through a Facebook discussion about the lack of black women included on a playlist. Her comment 'it feels like we are being erased from the music in more ways than the usual'. Since that moment, and connecting with Sandra, I realised what a truly incredible women Sandra Booker is. It wasn't long before I asked her to join our Women in Jazz Media team and I am honoured to have her involved on our work and publish her words in this edition.

Sandra recently received the PAVE Inspiration Award for her advocacy of survivors of intimate partner sexual abuse. PAVE stands for Promoting Awareness/Victim Empowerment founded by assault survivor Angela Rose in 2001. This organization is committed to supporting victims who find themselves seeking support, community, and justice while shattering the silence that protects predators and their enablers, giving a platform to the victimization of women who dare to tell.

Sandra's solo show "She Can Be Evil - A Survivor's Story" received rave reviews when it premiered in September 2021. Sandra hopes to remove the stigma from victims abused by intimate partners along with the gaslighting and shame associated with reporting it, especially as it pertains to women of color.

Sandra's brilliant essay "The Untethered Tongue: Lifting the Black Feminine Voice in Jazz" has just been published in the African-American Intellectual History Society - please do read this impotant article.

Sandra's work is not only inspirational but vital if we are to see change. The strength and courage it takes to speak out, as Sandra does, must not be underestimated. Her voice deserves a platform and inspires women to find that strength and know that their voices are respected, valued – and heard.

Thank you Sandra for all you do. Fiona Ross Sandra Booker is regarded as one of the best voices in the modern jazz scene. She has performed with Lalo Schifrin and the WDR Big Band, Wynton Marsalis & The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Billy Higgins, Frank Collett, Dado Moroni, Phillippe Martel, and the Dennis Dreith Band amongst others.

Highly respected for her virtuosic scat ability, impeccable timing, crystalline tone, and irrepressible musicality, she continues to push the musical envelope to create a style and sound that is her own. Her deep Southern roots and razor-sharp musical intuition are ever-present in her interpretations of standards, contemporary, and original compositions.

She combines aspects of different genres to blend old styles into new ones such as urban country, French neo-soul, or contemporary gospel/hip-hop. By fusing styles ranging from blues, and R&B to Brazilian and classical music into her compositions and performances, Booker is changing the sound of music as she hears it.

Booker also studied classical voice with Bela Berger and Marion Cooper, a student of the prestigious NOCCA Institute (formerly the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts -NOC-CA). She briefly took jazz voice with Mike Campbell. Her voice has appeared in major radio and television advertising campaigns including Coca-Cola and Ralph Lauren. She earned a B.A. degree from the University of Los Angeles, California (UCLA) in ethnomusicology with an emphasis in jazz studies. She has conducted vocal workshops and masterclasses at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, LAUSD, and the Civica Scuole di Musica (Sondrio, Italy).

She has released two recordings Very Early (1995) and When Love Happens: The Loving Day Concert (2011) on her label The Booker Group (formerly Jersey Boy Music) with three previously recorded projects slated for release in fall 2022 and spring 2023 including Sandra Booker and the New Trio Live from Pasadena Conservatory of Music Barrett Hall. She continues her work as a playwright with her solo shows "Life without God: Confessions of an Atheist, Black Woman" which tackles the taboo subject of race and religion, and "She Can Be Evil - A Survivor's Story" addressing intimate partner sexual abuse, to rave reviews.

Booker is the founder of the Jazz Musicians Against Cancer fund that raises resources and advocates for music as a form of wellness therapy for cancer survivors. She created Transgenre Music NonbinaryTM and the Artists Spotlight series for genre-defying creatives. In 2022, she became a contributing writer for Women In Jazz Media and is working on her first novel "I, ATHIEST" to be released in 2023.

Sandra Booker website

Link to: "The Untethered Tongue: Lifting the Black Feminine Voice in Jazz"



SOAP OPERA

BY SANDRA BOOKER

ne of the most popular daytime dramas and a personal favorite was a soap opera called General Hospital. Americans were fascinated by the lives of the Webber and Quartermaine families. These were well-to-doers, those chosen few fortunate enough to find themselves amongst the upper echelon of respectable society. It became crazy good and wildly popular in the early 1980s. Who could forget the romance of all romances between Laura Webber and Luke Spencer, played by Genie Francis and Anthony Geary? They were daytime T.V.'s first super couple long before there was such a thing in real life, or as J.J. of Good Times fame would say, "DYN-O-MITE."

Laura was the demure, soft-spoken, pretty, buxom, sweet blonde, all-American girl next door. Lovely, moody, and blue, experienced but angelically naïve. She was pre-approved for a good life that included family, friends, money, and opportunity, no matter the tragedy. She was the girl every girl wanted to be. And then, there was Luke. The sly, cool, street-savvy, lanky-legged, Jew-fro'd, blue-eyed soul brother brimming with bravado, ambition, and lots of insecurities, desperate to win in life – to come out on top.

It was a chilly, sunny autumn afternoon on November 16, 1981, waiting for the big, blessed event; from the make-believe town of Port Charles, New York. An anxious and enthusiastic group of girls in mother's living room waited with bated breath to watch the wedding of the century, along with 30 million other television viewers, with all the spectacle of a Disney princess movie. The marriage of Laura and Luke was what dreams were made of, catapulting the viewer to a land of sheer make-believe. We celebrated their happy union, their happy ending, and their "love supreme, love supreme, love supreme." Their passion had overcome adversity, misadventure, and even death. The Queen of the silver screen, Elizabeth Taylor, made a cameo appearance as the villainous Helena Cassadine, the matriarch of the Cassadine empire. Jazz trumpeter Herb Alpert scored a number-one hit with his song "Rise" because it became a love theme of their relationship. It could only be described as "romance mania."

As we swooned, smiled, and sobbed, the audience seemed to forgive and forget that a drunken Luke forced himself onto our darling Laura on the dance floor of his Campus disco. Laura was working there as a waitress. She was his employee. We dismissed that the venue was a cover for mobster Frank Smith to cover his money laundering business. Despite being forced to go on the run and other over-the-top shenanigans, we believed in their love, and nothing else mattered. Now, she was taking his hand in holy matrimony. She found the faith and devotion to "shake it off, shake it off, shake it off," to get over it and just "let it go, let it go," and move on. Sorry, Mickey! America was getting the wedding we all wanted. They were in love now.

As the adage goes, "love conquers all," right? Did it ever cross her mind that the man she was marrying, for better or worse, once raped her? When did we stop scratching our heads as the viewing public, the fans? Maybe she just needed time to accept this mistake and let love take its course. Or had she been groomed by her abuser to love, honor, and cherish him no matter the dirty deed? She did not go to the cops. Did that exonerate Luke? Imagine if she had. Would we still have thought, "Great super-couple! Glad it worked out," or would we have labeled her (not him) to be crazy? What if America's favorite bad boy had become more aggressive, a stalker, violent predator? Would losing access to her somehow justify that shift in psychology? Would we have forgiven him then? Did doing it once, instead of repeatedly, allow him a special kind of forgiveness?

Who knows? The bitter reality is that it did not cost him anything. He did not lose her. He did not lose access to her. He was afforded the chance to atone for his sin, received no punishment for his licentiousness, and bore no stain or public outcry for his impulse-driven violation. General Hospital received hate mail for a storyline that included an interracial couple some seasons later. However, the sexual assault of a beloved character was sanitized and repackaged with fanfare to cover the stench of betrayal and privilege. We dismissed that they were not in love when he committed his crime of passion.

It is not like he was a stranger, either. Remember, he was her boss. In our patriarchal roles, we view sexual violence as "just one of those unfortunate things." Besides, it was rape without extreme violence. We, the viewing public, dismissed what is technically termed forced seduction to explain away the ugliness, the powerlessness, and the horror of sexual assault. Forced seduction is rape without visible or extreme verbal or physical violence. Luke did not cuss or say awful things to her; he did not brutalize or mutilate her. He even apologized eventually. However, he raped her. It was an act of rape. Louder for the unconvinced crowd. He raped her, and we watched it. We all knew it, but we did not seem to care. Luke never committed that particular blunder again with Laura or anyone else in the show. For the next three decades, General Hospital reigned supreme for ABC, and the character of Luke Spencer sashayed off into the sunset, remaining of the genre's most adored figures. It is one of the only four soaps on daytime television.

For Laura's part, we watched her experience various bouts of mental illness. We pacified ourselves with the "She is strong! She will survive for love's sake." She learns to see and love him beyond the dark points of his soul. She showed us how to forgive the unforgivable. She found compassion and understanding for his duplicity. The question becomes, "who loved her through it?" The family and friends she could not tell? And what about the fear of her rapist in hot pursuit? Did his desire override his abuse because he thinks he loves her? Did no one consider the shame and confusion of surrendering to his needs while loving him profoundly and unconditionally while keeping the darkest of secrets? It seems it did not matter to the viewing public, especially women viewers, because we wanted their romance at all costs. Besides, he pledged his undying, everlasting devotion and was not that restitution itself.

The captivated audience liked Luke so much that he got a pass for 30 years as a bar-brawling, slim-shady, mob-connected town grifter who pivots into a respectable, business-owning, love-redeemed man who once raped a

woman, who once raped his future wife. So, we, the collective viewing audience, got over it too, and in doing so, we became a nation of sexual voyeurs, willing to turn a blind eye to the horrors of rape and the lifelong damage it does to the victim and those left with the task of watching that person heal. So far too often, they do not. Instead, they spiral into various vices, including self-harm, alcoholism, drug abuse, promiscuity, mental illness, and the list goes on and on and on.

Far too often, we in the know say and do nothing until we or someone we love becomes the victim. Then our righteous indignation comes to the fore, never fully recognizing we relinquished our power to prevent a tragedy if only we dared to speak up and act to expose the abuse and the abuser. There is little in the way of rehabilitation for those who commit this crime. The predator gets a green light while the prey is left to rebuild their lives from the inside out. Luke Spencer raped Laura Webber. Everyone knew the crime he committed, but no one cared. So what does it say of a society that can allay would garner outrage and disdain for such a reprehensible act? Rape should never be used for entertainment purposes, for indeed, we are what we entertain and evolve into what entertains us.



SHESAID

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'She Said' Review: An Unflinching Thriller That Gives Voice to Victims By Sandra Booker

Director Maria Schrader and screenwriter Rebecca Lenkiewicz have magnificently captured the trials and tribulations of women speaking out against men in positions of power and how the industry perpetuates the abuse. Adapted from a book by the same name, it chronicles the investigation of New York Times journalists Megan Twohey and Jodi Kantor of the New York Times, brilliantly portraved by Carey Mulligan and Zoe Kazan. They are every bit what Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman were to Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in 'All the President's Men' in terms of their due diligence to get the story straight. They exhibit their frustration without abandoning their femininity and vulnerability, with moments of heartbreak and rage at so much injustice. The range of emotions gives this movie authenticity making the characters relatable.

She Said painfully highlights the consequences of coming forward and going on the record to expose rampant abuse in the entertainment industry. Their investigation set the stage for the #MeToo movement that erupted in 2017, setting off a firestorm of victims emerging from the shadows of shame, fear, and humiliation. In Weinstein's case, it became harder to dismiss the accusations of actresses like Rose McGowan, Gwyneth Paltrow, Lupita Nyong'o, Selma Hayek, Annabella Sciorra, and many others who came forward. The industry finally seemed willing to listen and, more importantly, take meaningful action. We owe a collective "thank you" and debt to activist and sexual assault survivor Tarana Burke for starting this movement in 2006, which sparked change in an industry notorious for sexual exploitation. In 2020, Weinstein, 67, was found guilty of a first-degree criminal sexual act and third-degree rape. He was sentenced to 23 years in prison by a New York court and is on trial in

California for the 2005 rape of documentary filmmaker Jennifer Seibel-Newsome, wife of Governor Gavin Newsome.

She Said is a well-paced, packaged, and intelligent psychological juggernaut that succeeds by letting the victims-turned-survivors speak for themselves from flashbacks to the present day. At a private screening in Los Angeles, there were audible gasps, and mutterings of shock and disbelief at the tactics used to silence the victims ranging from harassment and intimidation to threats of physical violence. The film does not try to convince the viewer of guilt or innocence. Instead, it simply lets the facts fall where they may and, in doing so, lends credibility to what is uncovered and disclosed. This film is a social and cultural thriller set in the court of public opinion. The audience must weigh the evidence and conclude what is true. However, the evidence quickly becomes overwhelming, making it nearly impossible to look the other way.

Carey Mulligan and Zoe Kazan are the perfect "odd couple," with Mulligan being steadfast in her pursuit of the truth, while Kazan is more of a neophyte learning to manage her emotional outburst without being sappy or overly dramatic. They find common ground in wanting to give the victims a voice and even retribution for what they have endured. Schader is wise to avoid the typical trap of having the characters seek revenge. Instead, they seek moral and public vindication - for truth's sake. For many of these women, truth is the only thing on their side. Mulligan and Kazan avoid indicting the protagonists with long-winded diatribes about the advantages of men, but they show the disadvantages of being a woman under such circumstances. The lack of resources to take on not only the predator, but the industry that makes him possible and protects him, is only part of what is so daunting and makes coming out so precarious.



This film takes the viewer on a journey of discovery to locate the puzzle pieces bringing their stories into focus, creating one complete picture using the recollections in making a rock-solid case against Weinstein. It is a picture more hideous than that portrait in the attic of Dorian Gray. The accusers are asked to tell their side of the story but "just the facts." Then, suddenly, there is corroboration with each story revealing a shared experience with Weinstein. Those accounts of "I thought I was the only one" and "I told everyone, but nobody listened" establishes a pattern of poor impulse control. The financial payouts make it plain that he knows his conduct is wrong but disregarded as long as he was an asset to the industry.

The reluctance of many women to share their experiences is understandable. Those who did but refused to do so publicly for fear of reprisal expose the real and present danger accusers face by coming forward. Far too often, they are left holding the emotional, psychological and financial bag of having to fight Goliath, who has a flame-

thrower, while trying to defend themselves with a clamshell and toothpick. There are no capes in this crusade. No one has a superwoman complex. Instead, they come off as relentless worker bees with the task of protecting the queen; in this case, the queen is the truth. They catalog the crimes committed against the victims with clarity, acknowledging their trauma, not only from the abuser but from an industry and justice system that continues to fail to protect them. The subject of sexual misconduct is not an easy topic to unpack because so many lives and lifestyles are built upon maintaining the status quo, where egos are more inflated than solar systems and more fragile than a snowflake in a burning house. Studio bosses, agents, directors, producers, and showrunners generate millions annually. Making an enemy with someone who can destroy a career overnight that took decades to build and cultivate is a high-stakes game few are willing to play.

The stellar supporting cast includes veterans Patricia Clarkson (Rebecca Corbett), Andre Baugher (Dean Baquet), Mike Houston (Harvey Weinstein, who is only seen from behind), and Ashley Judd (playing herself). One of the most compelling lines comes from Judd, who says, "I wanna work" after being shunned professionally in real life by Weinstein for rejecting his advances.

Sarah Ann Masse (Emily Steel), a Weinstein survivor, is one of the most sympathetic characters. She accuses the former US President, Donald J. Trump, of sexual misconduct but is reluctant to go on the record. She finds herself the target of threats and vitriol often directed at survivors.

Masse, the founder of Hire Survivors Hollywood, approached Universal Studios about hiring survivors for this production. They heeded her call to do so and found herself cast in the film. This decision was essential to the movie because accusers were allowed to speak for themselves. Veteran actress Samantha Morton (Zelda Perkins) is a force to be reckoned with in one of the most memorable scenes. Her contribution is nothing short of riveting as the defiant employee who resigned from her executive position at Miramax in protest of Weinstein's menacing behavior and defense of her colleague and friend Rowena Chiu (Angela Yeoh). In agreeing to sign a non-disclosure agreement, she negotiated a list of significant demands that would lay the groundwork to prove that Weinstein paid large sums of money to conceal his violent sexual behavior. It also shows how NDAs are used to further silence, bully, and intimidate victims from speaking out.

Universal Studios should be applauded for greenlighting this project. Why? Because Hollywood is rarely willing to air such "dirty laundry," yet in doing so, it signals a change in the industry and how that change must start at the top. Let us hope so. At a run time of 2 hours and 15 minutes, the movie stays grounded and focused on telling the experiences of the victims and journalists without becoming a pulpit or soap box. It does not shy away from the trauma of being assaulted but does not exploit it. It does not rely on lurid sex scenes to re-enact the violence perpetrated. However, the focus is on giving the voiceless a voice to corroborate a pattern of abusive behavior that was an open secret. Without disclosing the many deeply triggering moments, this film will be challenging to watch and hard to forget.

It examines despair, regret, shame, fear, and exasperation. It is also a testament to hope, endurance, and the fight for justice. This movie will get inside the mind and make one question every time they have dismissed allegations against someone in a position of power, or perhaps, someone they know. The viewer is watching a process necessary to get at the irrefutable truth because there is often

blowback against women with the courage to step forward.

'She Said' is equally effective in addressing the role of the enablers who demean and target whistleblowers through gossip, gaslighting, exclusion, and isolation. These tactics make the accuser invisible and powerless, rendering her claims baseless and void. There is a disconcerting scene at the beginning where a package containing human fecal matter is delivered to Emily Steel, who accused former President Donald Trump of sexual misconduct. It emphasizes the fear of being exposed to unseen threats that can easily manifest into bodily harm or worse. Celebrity attorney Lisa Bloom (Anastasia Barzee) and former New York City prosecutor Linda Fairstein reveal a darker side of abuse and betrayal within the legal and justice system and from other women. Bloom, the daughter of high-profile civil attorney Gloria Allred, became an adviser to Weinstein. Unfathomable but true. Despite representing several women who came forward against Bill O'Reilly, resulting in his ouster from the Fox Network, she functions as a subversive with inside knowledge on how to derail the victims while shielding the victimizer, leaving them to ponder whom they can trust. Sadly, many feel there is no one they can turn to, and they live and even die in disbelief, bitterness, and rage. It gives men like Weinstein, Trump, and countless others a pass shifting the focus to clearing their names but leaving the victim tarnished and targeted by other predators.

The confirmation hearings of US Supreme Court justices Clarence Thomas and Brett Kavanaugh are prime examples of the accused being portrayed as the victim, and Weinstein is no stranger to the role. Despite the scores of women who emerged from the shadows to demand accountability against Weinstein, there are just as many scoffers who insist the accusers were nothing more than "fame seekers" and "gold-diggers" who could not cut it in the business. Those who can do it and those who cannot cry "rape." There is no record of a single woman whose career has soared to the highest echelons of fame and success by claiming to be the victim of an assault.

The score by composer Nicholas Britell is minimalist, repetitive, haunting, and beautiful. It is unnerving to employ an ostinato phrase that is repeated throughout the film, using different instrumentation to shift the mood of what is being expressed while managing to remind us of what has taken place and how the work to earn justice is repetitive and unyielding. Cinematographer Natasha Braier captures the grittier street-level view of the ordinary, day-to-day life of New York City juxtaposed against the breathtaking views from the offices of the New York Times, perhaps to represent the haves versus the haves less.

All in all, She Said is a cinematic triumph. It elucidates the necessity for thorough, triple-checked, and compelling journalism that has led to crucial societal changes. We must see the value in a free and open press, not one controlled or corrupted by money, prestige, or privilege. The First Amendment is sacred and protected at all costs. Without it, we live in fear whenever we dare to speak truth to power. For many victims, justice comes too late, if it ever comes at all. So many live shattered lives, hoping to be heard, seen, and supported but rarely finding it. The day of reckoning has come for Weinstein and a few others like him, but until the day that the enablers find the courage to say "No" to the gaslighting, ostracizing and bullying of victims, little will change, and that is to the detriment of everyone. It is a MUST-SEE.

In May 2022 to coincide with the Mental Health Foundation's 'Mental Health Awareness Week', Women in Jazz Media published an article written by our Mental Health and Wellbeing group members Diana Torti and Fiona Mactaggart, discussing WiJM's aim to support mental health and wellbeing amongst the Jazz community and also to support a wide-ranging discourse about the particular challenges of working in a creative industry such as Jazz. Often this can include an experience of feeling isolated and "the only one" with our own particular mental health issues.

You can read the article here: Mental Health
Awareness in the Jazz Industry

As next steps we would now like to present two items. The first is a podcast interview by WiJM's Fiona Mactaggart. Fiona, a Jazz journalist and retired psychiatrist speaks with Jazz singer and songwriter Sophie Bancroft, who shares some of the challenges she has faced as a busy, gigging, peri-menopausal Jazz musician.



The second is an article by WiJM's Diana Torti who is a Jazz vocalist and psychologist. Her article focusses on an area that she has studied intensively: the psychology of the performer.

We hope you may find these useful and look forward to sharing with you other such articles and interviews in the future. As ever, please feel free to offer us feedback via the usual WiJM contacts.



DIANA TORTI

Photo by Monika S Jakubowska



PSYCHOLOGY OF THE PERFORMER FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS

BY DIANA TORTI

Being a musician is probably one of the most beautiful jobs. Artists are generally lucky enough to have a profession that allows them to express their creativity at the highest level. It represents a professional and personal realization for which we are free to tell our most intimate and internal reality, using sounds, movements or words through music, dance, acting and any other form of performing art.

Throughout history artists have often struggled to do their jobs, for various reasons. Not everyone understands that being an artist also takes a lot of courage. Sometimes considered degenerate, slackers, subversive or lazy, they have come up against various restrictions and limitations that have led them to face a reality difficult to manage and frustrating to live.

The impression that public opinion has of artists is often linked to those few who have reached a level of notoriety that makes them safe and perhaps enviable in terms of career and position. However, most artists do not reach such high levels, instead are faced with several problems related to the peculiarity of our profession. These include the precariousness of work in terms of consistency over time, the lack of economic certainty, the irregular lifestyle and the need to train and find the time to maintain high standards of performance. The list is actually much longer than this, and further peculiarities are added if the artists are women or minorities, for which the dominant culture does not favour full realization, by setting limits and conditioning still too tied to a misogynistic culture and disinclined to integrate and promote all forms of diversity.

The last few years have seen these difficulties increase even more due to the Covid pandemic and the recent economic fluctuations due to the energy crisis following wars and consequent difficulties. Women, as is often the case, have been among the first to pay the ultimate price. Often colleagues and musicians complain of ever greater difficulties, and these are often linked to strong reactions of frustration, anxiety, fear, and depression.

These states of mind are not always linked to mental illness, but they are nonetheless signs of an extremely delicate moment that we are all living through, and which leads musicians, perhaps due to their specific professional characteristics or their rather sensitive receptivity to external stimuli, to face serious and challenging difficulties. These reactions are often linked to feelings of guilt or distrust in a situation that is beyond our control, but whose consequences have implications for our lives on a professional but also human level.

The purposes of organizations such as Women in Jazz Media, blogs, articles like this one or initiatives that take place in various contexts for artists, are fundamental, because we often feel alone in facing these difficulties. Sometimes our reactions in the face of these kinds of problems can lead us, consciously or not, to not share our difficulties with others. But the sense of isolation we experienced in recent years gives an idea of how important it is to share positive or negative experiences with others, to exchange ideas, to dialogue, and to connect with each other. Sharing can take place on several levels, in the natural relationship between human beings or even by cate-

gory sectors, to allow professionals who carry out the same job to find reference points, and to give sense to the category problems they encounter in carrying out their work.

These difficulties can also lead to further problems which compromise working life and the possibility of performing. In this case, psychological difficulties can create further career issues, because they might block or affect performance skills: performance anxiety, stage fright or depression are among the most widespread nowadays.

An area of research in the performing arts has recently emerged: the Psychology of the Performer. This discipline born in the sports field involves researchers, psychologists, artists and professionals in the sector, in the search for techniques, strategies, and approaches to be used in the dance, musical and theatrical fields to improve and support artists' performances.

Without going into the specifics of these approaches, the basic idea is to give tools to allow performances to be consistent. Considering the link between mind and body, experts of this field propose a series of techniques that favour a balance between mental and physical skills. The aim is to know more about performing dynamics and to overcome obstacles and conditioning that can preclude or block a performance.

The variables that are studied to better understand the psychological dynamics of the performer are linked to both his personality and his identity. They are also linked to the social context made up of all the relationships that the performer has in the professional world in which he operates (whether it be audience, colleagues, managers, journalists, etc.).

These studies also consider the factors that affect the context in which we live: the trend of the economy, the job market, social facts, or events such as the pandemic with all the problems associated with these events. This approach intends to give a more realistic and exhaustive picture of the dynamics that

influence the performer's career, has more elements to understand its 'peculiarities' and manage the various aspects involved.

In this regard, the results of the research carried out so far aim to better understand problems such as performance anxiety and stage fright and to offer strategies to face and solve these difficulties.

Although the topic is sensitive, complex and would require further research, the aspect to underline is that there are more and more tools to deal with obstacles or difficulties due to factors that often do not depend on us, but which nevertheless have consequences on our lives. The musician today cannot ignore the complexity of the reality in which we are immersed. The society in which we live often tends to isolate us and not all people are able to maintain an open relationship with the external environment. Therefore, it is important to make these problems known, because they are much more common than one might think. Moreover, a collective network is created through sharing, exchange, and knowledge in which these realities can be known about and tackled together.

These are aspects that should also be acknowledged and included in the training of young artists, to help them understand the nuances of a profession that is complex and beautiful at the same time, without overshadowing the artistic dreams that lead young people to take this path. It is always possible to change, transform, and transform ourselves. However, doing this research together constitutes even more precious support for us and for the social and artistic community in which we are included.

Click here to visit Diana Torti's website



Amazing gig "Gift for Ukraine" in Cockpit theatre on the 5th of December was the 30th concert that brilliant harpist Alina Bzhezhinska organised in support of her home country from the start of the war in Ukraine. She united many fabulous musicians and styles of music. Jazz, soul, rap, Ukranian folk music, Christmas carols, poetry, amazing collaborations and brilliant improvisations! Alina chose a few charities that support children in Ukraine and help people to stay warm in winter.

You can also make a difference supporting Alina's charity and donate here





Photo by Tatiana Gorilovsky











NICKY SCHRIRE AND MOTHERS IN JAZZ

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The idea initially came to Nicky when she started hosting and producing 'The Jazz Session' podcast series. Mother's Day was coming up, and as is often the case, the topic of 'Mothers' comes up, but Nicky saw this as the perfect opportunity to do something meaningful.

I've always enjoyed round table conversations whether in a live panel format or 'The Hollywood Reporter' type of round table, so I knew I wanted to do that. So I put together a list of different women who were working - jazz musicians who were gigging, touring but who were also mothers. It was also important to consider that it was international in nature, so I reached out to mothers from different countries who had the experience of motherhood while maintaining a jazz career.

Nicky gathered eight brilliant musicians: Laila Biali (Canada), Sarah Elizabeth Charles (USA), Christine Jensen (Canada), Lina Nyberg (Sweden), Linda May Han Oh (Australia), Tomoko Omura (Japan), Zoe Rahman (UK), and Sara Serpa (Portugal) and you can listen to the brilliant podcast here

There were two takeaways. One was that the women involved really enjoyed talking to other mothers within the jazz community about the ins and outs of juggling a career and parenthood and that it felt like it didn't happen very often, so this was something of a rarity. The other takeaway was how listeners to the episode responded. It was wonderful and heart-warming and I felt like there was a need for the conversation to continue.

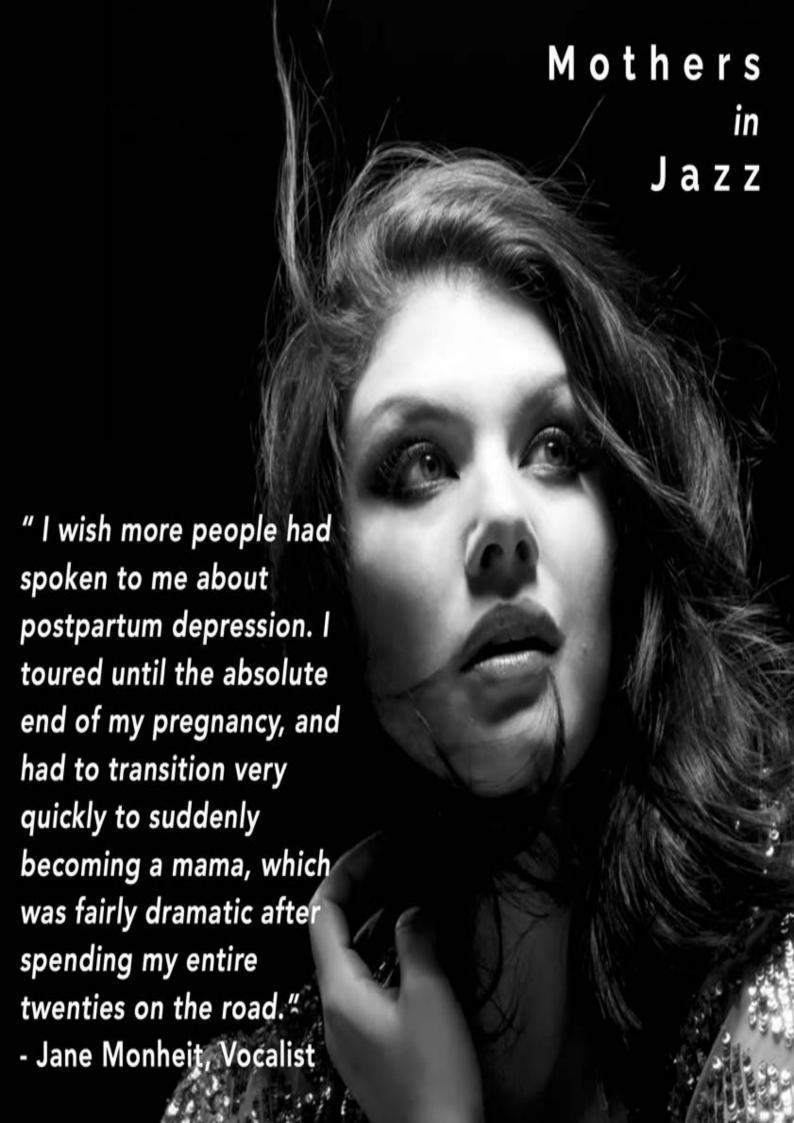
Reflecting on this and the best way forward, Nicky spoke to Sebastian Scotney of London Jazz News to see if he would be interested in running a series. He agreed and 'Mothers in Jazz' found a home with singer/songwriter Rebecca Martin as the debut article on August 1st.

'My top tip is for all moms. With the resources that you have and to your best ability follow the baby's rhythm with sleep and feeding. It leads to a happier baby and mom' Rebecca Martin

Followed by pianist Julia Hulsmann:

You can be a jazz musician and a mother. You just have to accept that the time is different than before. I started to be a lot more efficient once I had a child. For example, writing music when I had just 20 mins to spare'

Juggling many different life and work commitments is a struggle for many of us, so I asked Nicky why she decided to publish this as a weekly series.



Well, it's a lovely question because it actually speaks to the interest in the topic and the want for having this type of resource. At the time I had maybe ten of the interviews that were ready to go, and I said well maybe we can publish one a month and that's ten months and then I would have time to get others but Seb said let's publish a couple weekly to start to build momentum and to build the archive. I sent out emails to many, many women in the jazz community who I knew were mothers and I also did some research because there were a lot of people that were mothers and it surprised me. This is also part of the reason why this is important and it's not because they were hiding the fact, but they had just never been asked about it. So, after about two weeks instead of having ten geared up in the queue ready to be published, I think I had about 30 and it suddenly became very apparent that it was not going to be a problem publishing one every week...

Four months and twenty interviews later, Nicky has created something quite wonderful. Not only has she been able to provide a platform for women to discuss being a working mother in jazz, but she has facilitated discussions reaching further afield including valuable insights for expectant mothers and fathers,

I don't mean to move it into a place where we're talking about gender equity and jazz, but it is interesting and many of the mothers in the series are married to or are partners with men who are also jazz musicians. I always make a note in the preamble to every interview to give a bit of biographical info about the mother and I make a point to say whether they live with a partner or not because single parenting, I think, is the most phenomenal thing one can do and it changes everything - it reframes it.

I'm sure that there are some fathers who would love to be the primary caregiver but certainly in early life, that falls to the woman so how does that impact career and how can we then support women in that position? Also, a lot of women were very forthcoming about the breastfeeding mountain and post Natal depression and I love that we're talking about that because it makes the series universal. It is really just about motherhood pregnancy and that's something that we all need to talk about more



and I think that non mothers need to learn about that more to have compassion, patience and to have sympathy.

The universal appeal of this series is key and one of the many reasons it has become so hugely popular in a short amount of time. I did wonder if there had been any negatives – especially considering the general negativity on social media at times. Questions about whether there should be a 'father in jazz' series for example, but unsurprisingly Nicky gave the perfect response.

Well, it's a really good question because I really hate to be exclusive and that is never my M.O and it did pop up in my mind that by doing this, am I excluding people who are not parents? Or those who do not wish to become parents? But then I thought that that was so utterly ridiculous because if we think about things in that way, you wouldn't discuss anything! Women in jazz are a minority group and then mothers in jazz are a minority of a minority... so I considered that and then I quickly ignored it because well I'm not shoving this down anybody's throat. They can go through the blog, read it if it appeals or applies to them. It's the same thing as reading a review - if I'm not interested in the artist or the genre of music, I won't read the review but I'm not going to say how dare this review be published, it excludes me. It felt right that mothers should be the centrepiece of this series.

I was having a conversation with some wonderful male musicians here in Canada, many of whom are fathers, and they were saying how when they became dads and were grappling with identity and how to balance spending enough time practising but also being a hands-on Dad. They would go to a gig in the early days of new parenthood, and they would meet other fathers who were jazz musicians whose kids were older and were on the other side of newborn mayhem and infancy, and they would say you're doing a great job and here is my advice etc. But I only want support - grandparents, aunts, uncles, the works but I was very much struck by the image of the

woman, the mother. Being a mother is the loneliest experience and so bearing that in mind, this series allows mothers to get that support from other mothers within the jazz community, that they would not be getting otherwise.

Community is the key word here and Nicky explained that she doesn't want to be some kind of gatekeeper and she is quick to explain that she didn't invent the term 'Mothers in Jazz' but that the time was clearly right for this type of platform as she discussed with the inspirational Canadian jazz vocalist Laila Biali.

Laila Biali - who's wonderful and incredibly generous – and I were talking about women supporting other women and she's a great example of that. She was part of the original podcast interview and part of the series which was really meaningful to me but we laughed because she said to me, cocking her head to the side, 'you're not the first person to do mothers in jazz'. I said, oh completely I'm not reinventing the wheel but she said but it's it feels like you are the first person because of the effect it has had.



There is much to explore here and I cannot shout loudly enough about what Nicky has achieved. Do please go and have a look at this incredible series. This series is of interest to everyone which has been clear by the brilliant response from the jazz community. Thank you to Nicky Schrire and London Jazz News for giving a space for these important conversations.

To follow Nicky's Mothers in Jazz Series on London Jazz

News, please click here

To follow Nicky Schrire,

please click here





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.

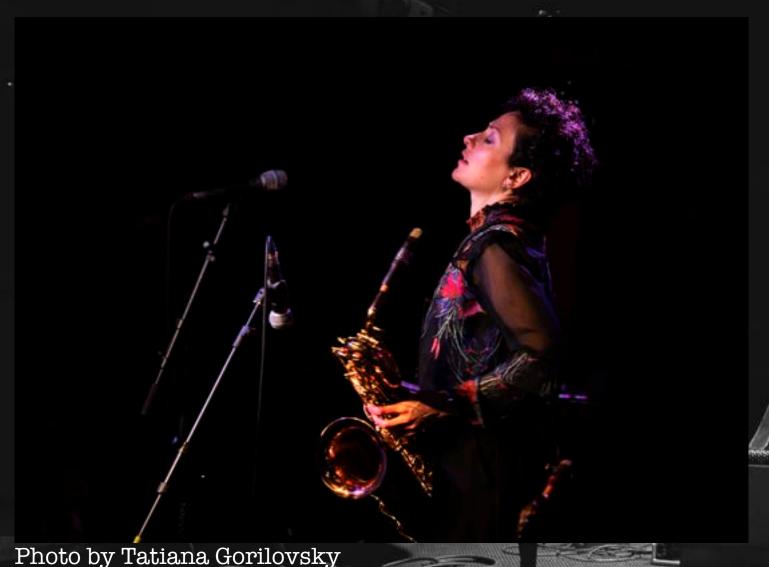


WOMEN IN JAZZ MEDIA PODCAST SERIES



IN CONVERSATION WITH...

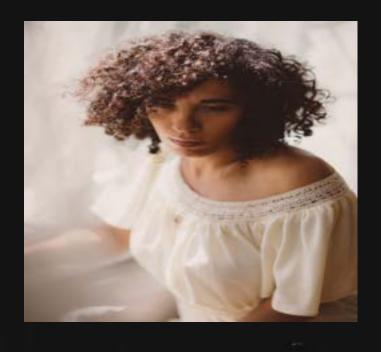
WITH HOST HANNAH HORTON



Click on the images to go straight to the podcast!

Esther Bennett Julia Biel Migdalia Van Der Hoven Amy Gadiaga Collette Cooper

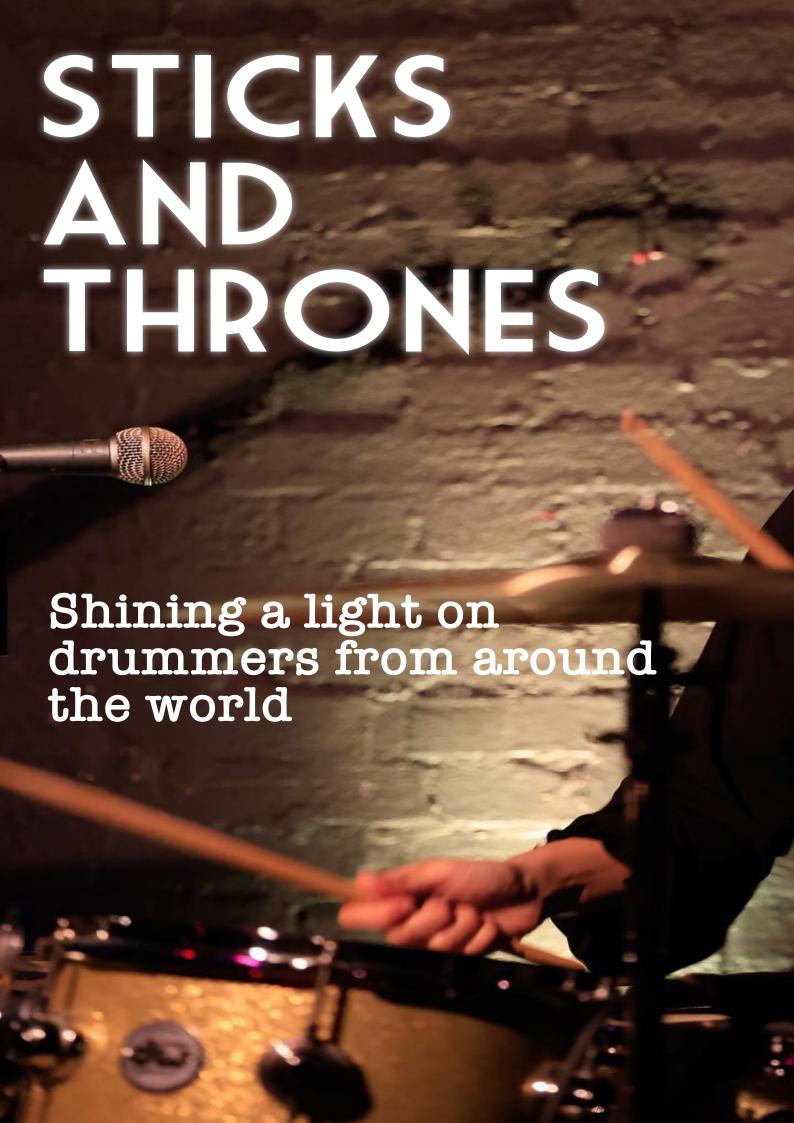














THE NOTES BETWEEN WITH LARA EIDI





Our brand-new podcast series' The Notes Between' with Lara Eidi.

Conversations exploring everything behind and about the world of songwriting! Our theme music 'Opened Eyes' is from Lara Eidi herself.

In this first episode, Lara talks to songwriter Liv Monaghan. Liv Monaghan is a vocalist and songwriter based in Paris. Producer and story-teller with two studio albums of compositions released between 2016 and 2018 and another on the way. 'My music pulls threads from Jazz, Soul, Rock, and Romanticism to create an alternative, sometimes experimental, often poetic and always original sound'. Lover of the left-behind, of old things of letter-notes and half-light ghosts which get stitched, strung or typed back up together to make something new.

Lara Eidi is an artist that thrives on being different. Born in Athens Lebanese- Canadian parents, her entire life and career is that of a singer-songwriter, multidisciplinary artist, educator and writer. Undefined by style, Lara's music has earned her own unique place in the music world as a storyteller, jazz and folk singer, composer and recording artist heard at venues in London including the Barbican, St Martins in the Fields, Green Note, Edinburgh Festival, Beirut International Festival to name a few. Born in Athens to Lebanese-Canadian parents, her music has gained her critical acclaim as an artist with a truly unique voice (BBC Artist, 2020- 2021), who manages to shift between musical styles and vocations owed to her diverse background as a singer (Guildhall School of Music and Drama); writer (English Literature from the University of St. Andrews) and educator. Lara's passion and artistry comes from a pure and authentic drive to connect with audience members as well as students, creating a space where the healing power of music can be felt by all. Recently supported by Hawkwood College and the Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust, Lara is set to record her new album in Spring 2023, and has just launched her very first podcast on songwriting 'The Notes Between' with Women in Jazz Media.

Finally, her passion for music as a life choice has led her to become an in demand educator, offering workshops at leading music institutions as well as community spaces in Europe.

"Lara Eidi is one of those singers who connects with the audience as soon as she starts to sing. Perhaps psychologists can explain the gift – and it is a gift " Sandy Brown Jazz- London

Lara Eidi website

ON THE BOOKCASE

Exploring the world of female authors, this podcast series highlights and promotes books and their authors from around the world. Fascinating conversations with inspirational women with host Fiona Ross.

Click on the images to go straight to the podcast!

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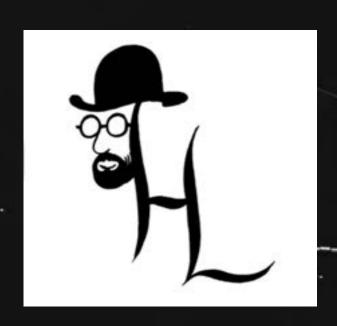
WOMENIN JAZZ MEDIA



EFG LONDON JAZZ FESTIVAL



It was once again the time of year when jazz lovers and observers everywhere enjoy the excitement of the EFG London Jazz Festival. This November, we put on a wide range of events and workshops that aimed to both inspire and represent everyone in jazz, as well as shine a light on all the work done by women working in the Jazz industry, both in front and behind the scenes. Working at two venues - Jazz Cafe Posk and Toulouse Lautrec, and supported by Jazz Views as part of the 'Women Who Inspire' series, Isabel Marquez was our roving reporter throughout the festival.





























Amythyst Kiah by Tatiana Gorilovsky









Carroll Thompson by Tatiana Gorilovsky







Dianne Reeves by Tatiana Gorilovsky















Alina Bzhezhinska by Tatiana Gorilovsky





Jumoke Fashola by Tatiana Gorilovsky













Shingai by Tatiana Gorilovsky

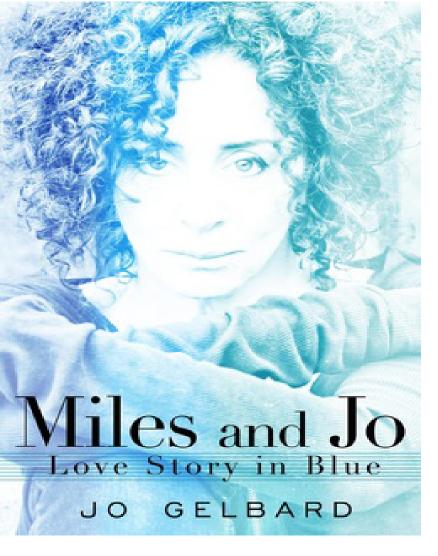






Yilian Canizares by Tatiana Gorilovsky





Jo Gelbard was Miles Davis's girlfriend and companion for the last seven years of his life. A relationship that would change her life forever, bringing happiness, confusion and at times emotional pain.

Twenty years after his death, Jo felt able to commit her thoughts and feelings of her time with Miles down on paper and published her book, MILES & JO: Love Story In Blue.

Jo was kind enough to send me a copy of the book, and below is my review that was published on the Jazz Views website in 2012.



JO GELBARD: LOVE STORY IN BLUE... AND BEYOND

BY NICK LEA he inevitable question when presented with this book is 'do we really need another book about Miles Davis?', and when the finished article is as good a read and full of insight as this, then the answer is a most emphatic yes.

When the book arrived in the post from New York I was not quite sure what to expect, and a cursory glance perhaps asked more questions than it answered. Why did Gelbard wait twenty years after Miles' death before writing her book? What did she hope to achieve upon publication? And perhaps if these questions were not addressed directly, then reading this compelling story has shed a new perspective upon the trumpeter's last years and his interest in his art, and indeed this particular artist.

The book is autobiographical in so much as Gelbard not just recounts her time with Miles, but also intersperses elements about her life prior to their meeting. This serves not just as additional information about the factual side of her life but also helps to explain how and why, as a married woman with a young child, that she found herself in a tumultuous and at times violent relationship with one of the twentieth century's greatest musicians.

Gelbard's writing style is succinct and matter of fact, with pauses that seem to crop up as if examining herself what she has just written and analysing her reasons for doing so. This brings an honesty and humility to the book as Gelbard tells of her affection for Davis, and



how this ultimately grew into a deep love that lasted from their chance encounter in 1984 (as neighbours living in the same building) to Miles' death in 1991.

She examines the relationship from their initial meeting to their developing friendship and their mutual interest as artists, and subsequent collaborative work and exhibitions, to the realisation that her feelings were growing much stronger and that her world was about to change dramatically if she continued the association.

The infamous Davis temperament inevitably showed itself, and Gelbard addresses this in a manner that does not condone his violent behaviour or ask for sympathy as the victim of such abuse. Nor does she try to defend the man she loves, but tries to rationalise it as if to gain a better understanding of this herself after the passing of time.

There is no bitterness or rancour to be found, even when after Davis's death his family banned her from the funeral. Her interest in Miles was not for his public persona or achievements, and somewhat endearingly she would call him by his middle name, Dewey, when they were together. As if by doing so Miles the famous jazz musician could be kept out of their very intimate and personal relationship. And because of this, and despite events and pressures from the outside world, perhaps Jo Gelbard, out all of Miles' numerous girlfriends, was the only one who loved him for being himself and not from any advantages that their association with him might bring.

An enlightening and ultimately enjoyable book that celebrates the music and art of Miles Davis through the eyes of a woman who risked everything to be with him, and by doing so discovered herself in the process.

MILES AND JO: Love Story in Blue by Jo Gelbard was published in 2012, and tells of her relationship in detail and with great insight into Miles' persona, and it was after reading her compelling work that this interview with Gelbard took place. Following on from the review of the book I was delighted to have the opportunity to talk to Jo about the book and her reasons for putting these chapters in her life in print.

JO GELBARD Love Story In Blue (And

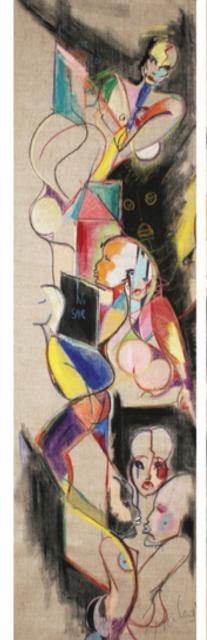
Green And Orange...)

In 1984 Jo Gelbard's life was to take a dramatic turn and things would never be the same again. A chance meeting in an elevator with Miles Davis, arguably one of the greatest ever jazz musicians, who lived in the same building, would lead her on a turbulent journey of self discovery. Although never having met each other previously, this one brief encounter propelled them into a relationship that was all consuming for both and would last for seven years until the trumpeter's death in 1991.

MILES AND JO: Love Story in Blue by Jo Gelbard was finally published in 2012 and tells of her relationship in detail and with great insight into Miles' persona, and it was after reading her compelling work that this interview with Gelbard took place.

I began by asking Jo why she had wanted to write the book, and why she had waited some twenty years after Miles' passing before publishing her work.

"For the first ten years after his death I was involved in litigation with his estate over the artwork that we painted together, and as a result needed time to recover from the anger I felt over being subjected to that process" she explains. "After winning the case I began exhibiting the work in Europe and realized that the public wanted more information about our collaboration and relationship. As a result of interviews and publicity surrounding the art shows, various individuals expressed interest in buying the rights to our story, for a movie, book, and or play. During negotiations, I realized that I would have no control over how Miles and I would be portrayed if I sold the rights. I then decided that only I could tell the story truthfully. And because I didn't want any pressure from outside influences, I elected to self publish. My intention is for the public to see him as a person not just an icon or celebrity. I wanted to humanize him and





dispel all of the negative ideas surrounding him and unveil the soul that gave us all of that miraculous music."

So having decided that there was considerable interest in this period of Miles life and art, was the book difficult to write, or had it been conceived and written over a long period of time?

"The book was very difficult to write on an emotional level, but very easy on an intellectual level. The memories flooded into my consciousness like a broken levee. Over the span of two years, my only difficulty, aside from terrible spelling and computer illiteracy, was in deciphering which anecdotes were the most relevant. My editor and cover photographer, Lisa Sklar, was essential in helping me with that."

The time Gelbard spent writing the book would have been a period that would, as she has recounted, have brought many memories both good and bad, so I asked Jo how in looking back she would describe her relationship with Miles, and how it changed over the time they were together.

"Our relationship had a life and death intensity. He led me to the rest of my life, and I gave him the most loving compassionate finale to the end of his life. It never changed during the entire time. Although I grew as a person and became more independent and self assured, he was never exposed to that side of me. My thoughts remained hidden. My understanding of the cause of his volatility helped me manage difficult situations."

Some of these difficult situations would arise out of the couples need for privacy. Miles was fiercely protective of Jo and their relationship and did everything he could to keep their deepening involvement with each other out of the media. As Jo explains,

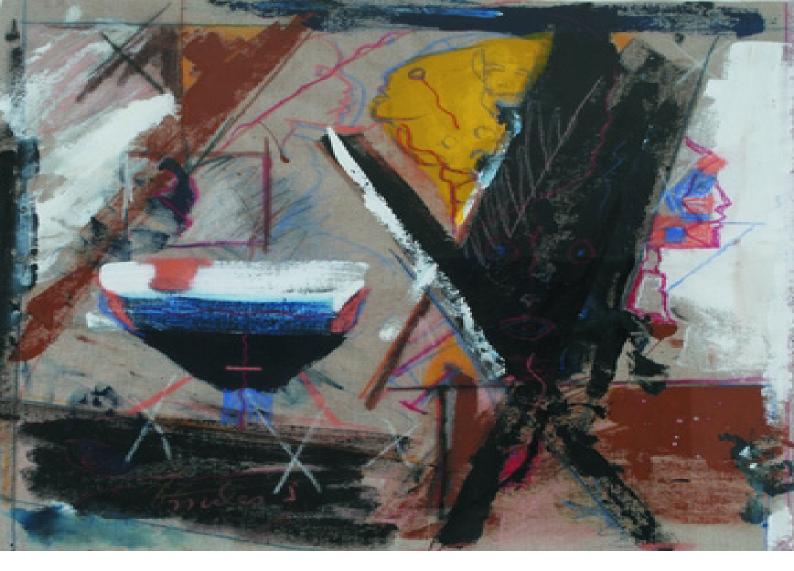
"Miles and I met while we were both married to other people. He obtained a divorce years before I did so he respected my need for anonymity. My identity was only uncovered as we began exhibiting and selling our artwork. Of course, he resented my absence from public celebrations and events that he needed to attend, but I tried to attend all concerts in New York City which were generally around his birthday. I also made an effort to be with him at birthday parties, but generally our relationship was behind closed doors. The biggest issue for him was that I couldn't accompany him on his tours and as his health deteriorated his fear of being alone on the road left him feeling increasingly vulnerable. But there was very little I could do to help the situation before I made the final decision to get divorced. I had no need to be public with our relationship because my responsibility to my son and respect for my husband took precedence at all times. We were and are

very private people and until I decided on the book, I felt that what went on between us was no one's business. Things change...that's life."

Our initial interest was your mutual love of art and painting. How would you say that Miles' influenced or changed your painting style? I asked Jo. Did you influence and direct him when working together or did he take the lead?

"We were both addicted to creative change, so our style was constantly evolving". Jo continues "Initially I took the lead, but we quickly became partners. Miles changed my entire perspective to life, so of course those changes were reflected on canvas. His mind had no boundaries nor did his creativity. He also was unafraid to risk failure in the quest for ultimate beauty. His style was more delicate, minimal and sweet ... like his sound. I have a hard strong hand with bolder strokes. Direction entered the picture when one of us couldn't get started, so either he or I would begin painting until we were both involved."





As Gelbard has always had her own artistic vision and ambition, it has been taken as fact that she would continue her own work after Davis's death. As a musician Miles has left a unique musical legacy that has influenced several generations of instrumentalists, as well as a host of imitators, so I was interested in finding out if their collaborative style of painting has influenced her current work, or does she feel as an artist that she has been able to move on and grow with her own sense of self discovery?

"My solo work is nature based so it is quite different from our collaborative work. There is an underlying cubist structure that I maintain in both periods. Initially after he died, I deliberately painted in his part as if he was there with me. It was pathetic".

Warming to the subject Jo elaborates further. "I felt incomplete as a solo artist. And then I realized that he was always with me, and he would appear in the paintings through my conscious anyway. I often finish a piece and dis-

cover faces that he would draw, hiding in my design. It's weird. My choice of nature as subject matter stems from the purest emotional high that I find in a perfect moment in nature, like a sunset. I believe we can all find serenity from such moments, and I try to capture the essence of that on canvas."

Inevitably, any interview that has associations with Miles will turn to his music. Although a music lover, Jo was not over familiar with Davis's vast body of work, and perhaps only made a casual acquaintance with some of his recordings. As a gift, however, Miles gave her a copy of Sketches Of Spain, his 1960 masterpiece with arranger and friend, Gil Evans.

It was with this in mind, and references to Gelbard recollecting tours and concerts with Miles' bands of the eighties and nineties that I ask if she has a particular era of his long career that she prefers.

"I didn't focus on Miles' music before I met him and I couldn't listen to any of his music after he died for over seven years without crying but now, he's on all the time. Asking me what I prefer is like choosing air over water...I need both to survive."

Describing her time with Miles as 'a journey of self discovery', I wonder if it is a journey that has reached its final destination with Davis's death or is it an ongoing journey that she is still travelling? "It was a journey of passion as well as self discovery. I think that life is about self awareness. We are all searching for the unique truth that defines our own reason for living. He just accelerated the process for me. His solitary road, ours together, and the one I travel now is defined by passion, freedom, creativity and love."

Finally, I ask Jo about her plans for the future, her own painting and exhibitions, or indeed plans for another book. To this Jo says simply "My hope is that everyone can view our collaborative work in one form or another. I'll keep painting and figure out the rest as it comes... 'follow it and see what it eats'."

Fast Forward... Ten Years After The Journey Began

At the time of publication, Jo Gelbard would have no idea of how the book would be received. The hope that she expressed that "everyone can view our collaborative work in one form or another. I'll keep painting and figure out the rest as it comes" did not quite work out that way. The journey through life is never smooth and as one would wish or imagine it to be.

It has been ten years since the publication of MILES AND JO: Love Story in Blue, and I was interested to discover how Jo had faired since the book hit the shops, and the attempts to have her work with Miles exhibited. The road she travelled was not an easy one, and in fact began before the book was even written.

"When Miles died, I was deleted from everything that pertained to him", explains Jo. "Due to the lawsuit with his estate, I became a pariah and almost everyone who I knew through Miles distanced themselves from me. As you know, I had to sue his family for recognition and ownership over the collaborative paintings that Miles and I created together. But in truth, that occurs very often in life with sudden changes.

When you marry, your single friends drift away. When you divorce, people choose sides and you're left with some, or none of the people that you knew as a couple. When your partner dies, the same thing happens. People feel secure being surrounded by people who maintain the status quo, whatever it is. Marriage, babies, divorce, bankruptcy, and illness and death are not great for maintaining relationships."





Continuing she says,

"So fast forward, and I win my case after a ten year battle, and the responsibilities of exhibits, promotion and sales become a challenge that were eventually too difficult to bear.

I was blessed by meeting an art dealer from London, Keith Denney, who created a magical journey where we exhibited in Paris, London and Amsterdam. All three cities were beyond gracious, welcoming and critically outstanding."

As successful as these exhibitions had proved to be, there would be no further opportunity for the Miles admirers and the general public to view their work together. Jo picks up the story saying:

"Two weeks into the month I was in NYC and about to return for the last two weeks of events, and Bobby's wife called me and announced that Bobby had a sudden heart attack and died. I was devastated and frozen and at

"You can fast forward to the conclusion of my European love affair with the art/ Miles world. Over the years I had been interviewed by Bobby Jackson for his radio broadcast. He was a kind, brilliant creative soul, who when he read my book arranged a month long Miles and Jo tribute in Cleveland, Ohio which included an art show of both the collaborative work and my own paintings. There were book signings, question answer forums about Miles, concerts by the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra, a demonstration in the gallery space where I led twenty or so adolescents in a collaborative paint session. I spread out a giant roll of brown paper on the floor, gave the kids markers, and when I said switch, they moved into another spot on the floor and enhanced the drawing of the last artist.

All the while, Miles' music played. I worked obsessively for months on the paintings that would represent me alone. Bobby was also in the middle of producing an audio version of my book.

Gathering her thoughts, Jo pauses before continuing. "Two weeks into the month I was in NYC and about to return for the last two weeks of events, and Bobby's wife called me and announced that Bobby had a sudden heart attack and died. I was devastated and frozen and at that moment I decided to stop painting. Two dead guys hanging over my shoulder when I paint was too much for me. I instructed the gallery to give away my paintings and to return only the collaborative work.

The book also became less interesting to me. I initially wrote the book to find my voice about Miles and me. So much had been erased by circumstances and writing the truth was very cathartic for me. I never cared about sales, promotion or making it more commercial by including sex and graphic negative detail."

For many this would have been the end of the road, and the story, but not for Jo. If through adversity we seek to rebuild and thrive, Jo Gelbard was certainly not finished. "My astrological sign is Scorpio", she says.



"We rise like the phoenix. I do it well and transform after crashing and burning. And when I rise, I soar higher than before. It's my nature. And so "Love story in Blue" is just that. A love story which although sad is about a higher love than most people experience, and I wrote about it to inspire those who seek it, those who have lost it, and those who have it and can understand where I've been. Whether the media or anyone else likes it or not is irrelevant to me. It is complete and perhaps I omitted stating how grateful I am for knowing Miles, for observing his creative genius and perspective, and for experiencing his all consuming passion and love. Perhaps all this was understood between the lines. perhaps not.

"So, the book and my painting ended approximately at the same moment. I believe in destiny and things happen for reasons that we don't immediately understand. I do believe that art and creativity is meant to create an exalted state of mind and spirit for both the artist and recipient of the work, be it Architecture, Music, Dance, Painting, Literature, Fashion, Theater and everything else I cannot list.

When it becomes a source of pain, sadness and torment it is time to stop, and I did. But as a phoenix I knew it was time to fly higher once again."

In the process of rediscovery and reinventing herself, Jo took her inspiration from her surroundings in NYC. "I am a runner. I run every day in Central Park in a magical nature preserve, a section called the ramble.

One day my surroundings looked like a story to me, so I began writing and illustrating a children's book 'Midnight in the Park'. My two grandsons, Roman and Luca, nature and my limitless love for them inspire me. It is about a small brown mouse that escapes the Museum of Natural History and moves into the park across the street where she is mentored by a cool black cat who shows her the way to freedom and joy.

I have submitted the draft to various publishers with no success. It is by far my greatest work, my finest fantasy and the purest artistic expression that is uniquely mine. I am hopeful that one day it might be published and if not then it's not meant to be. It does make me happy though as does drawing. Pencil and paper are a more focused, calm, introspective art form for me. There's no drama like with paint, no bravado, no ego, just intellect, talent and focus."

Again, as if deep in thought Jo adds,

"As for Miles, he is forever next to me. He inspires every line from my pencil, every creature in the park that I draw, every walk in nature that connects me to the universe that is sheltering him. When I draw leaves I see creatures hiding in them as he used to find faces in a line we painted, and I know he's there and I smile."



We would like to thank Nick Lea of Jazz Views for his continued support of our work and for contributing this article.

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SOMETHING NEW





Women in Jazz Media series 'Something New with Esther Bennett'.

Exploring new albums through conversation directly with the artist to share a little insight into their work. As one of the London Jazz scenes' most experienced, highly respected and widely loved jazz vocalists, Esther juxtaposes sensitivity and a sparky sense of humour in all her work and we are thrilled to have her involved in this new series to help platform new female led jazz releases across the world.

Having just been awarded 'Best Newcomer' at the 2022 Parliamentary Jazz Awards saxophonist and composer, Emma Rawicz is making waves on the UK music scene. She has been described as "An astonishing new talent" (Jamie Cullum - BBC Radio 2), 'a force to be reckoned with' (Jazzwise) and 'a fast-rising star' (London Jazz News). Her debut album 'Incantation' featuring all original compositions and inspired by contemporary jazz, jazz fusion, soul and folk, has shades of Wayne Shorter, Chris Potter and Kenny Garrett, but with a fresh edge that combines her UK and US influences. The album moves between driving, jazz-funk inspired numbers with tracks 'Voodoo' and 'Incantation', whilst offering sincere, brooding moments on 'Orison' and the moving Afro-Cuban flavoured 'Omen'. Not content with just showcasing her saxophone and composition chops, Emma's vocal and flute playing skills also transport the listener to new sound worlds.

"I wrote Voodoo, the first track on the album, based on a crazy, abstract, colourful piece of art; I just experimented with sound and found the composition out of it. Then I chose other words based on this theme – like incantation, omen, wishbone, etc. – and used those words as prompts for composition."

Hi Emma, first of all of course I must congratulate you on your Parliamentary Jazz Award in the Best Jazz Newcomer Category. So well deserved and I'm so pleased as you know I'm already a fan! How do you feel about that! (The award....not me being a fan..)



Thanks Esther, that's really nice of you! It was a complete surprise to be honest, but I feel very grateful to have been given the award. When it comes to the idea of "winning" anything in a creative field, I must say that at times it doesn't quite feel that the concept of an award falls in line with what it means to be an artist, but nonetheless it was really very flattering to have my efforts over this past year recognised, so I'm nothing but grateful for the support.

You are very young and yet your playing is advanced and well beyond your years. Can we have some history of your playing and musical education? Right from the beginning and up until the present day.

To be honest, I haven't been playing jazz, nor the saxophone, for very long. I picked both up around four years ago, at the age of sixteen, so I still feel quite new to it all really. I was however lucky to encounter music in various other ways prior to that, as I played the violin and piano in mainly classical settings from around age 6 to 16, as well as composing as much as possible. When I picked up the saxophone, I was lucky enough to spend a year studying at the Junior Guildhall School of Music and Drama, before going on to spend my

sixth form at Chetham's School of Music, after which I began my studies in a jazz degree at the Royal Academy of Music, of which I have just completed my second year. I feel like a lot of the opportunities I have been lucky enough to encounter have all happened quite quickly for me, and I still feel a bit in awe of it all, and very lucky to have been able to study at each and every one of these amazing schools. Prior to these, I had no specialist musical education at all.

Who are your musical influences past & present, here, across the pond and in Europe?

There are far too many to list here, but my top few would probably be Joe Henderson, Joni Mitchell, Tigran Hamasyan, Baden Powell, Nikki Iles and Mark Lockheart. Recently I have also been absolutely loving Fini Bearman's music.

You released this album in May and launched it at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club! Was this the first time that you've played there? Was it your first headline gig there? How was that experience for you?

The first time I played at Ronnie's was actually in June 2021, for my first headline gig there. I actually wrote almost all of the music on my debut album for that gig, and we recorded it just a few days later. It was therefore really special to be able to return to the iconic club to launch the album, less than a year after my first appearance there. It's a wonderful club that I hope to return to many times, and one that I have been fortunate enough to play at many times besides my own headline shows, with great bands such as the Lovers of Invention, Myele Manzanza and more.

About the album - there seems to be a theme; "Incantation, "Rune", "Omen". What's that about and



where did the inspiration for these titles come from?

I love to have a creative brief or stimulus of some sort when I write music. The first tune I wrote for the album was "Voodoo", a composition inspired by a piece of crazy abstract art, and I felt it had a strong, clear sound, so I decided to pick other titles relating to that theme, and see what kind of music evolved out of that idea. As a result, I think the album has quite a cohesive sound, which I'm really happy about, and I hope it provides listeners with something of a snapshot of who I was both as a composer and player around the time of recording.

About the musicians - though highly proficient and experienced players - the musicians who you play with and with whom you have recorded this album manage to excel themselves whilst allowing you to really shine. Tell us more about them and why you chose them to work with on this project.

I have been fortunate enough to play and work with a wide range of really wonderful musicians over the relatively short span of my career thus far. Two very key figures for me feature on Incantation: Ant Law and Scottie Thompson. While they're at very different career stages -- Scottie is the wonderful piano player on my album, and is in the same year as me at the Royal Academy of Music, and Ant is of course my guitar player, himself a very established voice on the scene. Both of these musicians have been a crucial part of my development both as a player and a writer, and



were integral to developing the sound of the album. They also really helped me through various anxieties surrounding the process of releasing my music for the first time, and indeed if it were not for them, the album may never have been released! Other very important musicians that I have worked with include Ivo Neame, David Preston, Asaf Sirkis, Conor Chaplin and more -- all of whom have played a huge part in my music.

A little more about you as a musical artist: You were born and raised in Cornwall and you are of Polish Heritage. How do you feel that these two places have influenced you musically? Have they had any influence on your playing and your composing?

I grew up in rural Devon, which is very different from London -- sometimes I feel like I'm still adjusting! I didn't really get started playing jazz when I still lived there, so I'm unsure if there's a real direct influence on my playing or writing now, but it's definitely where I was when I was first inspired to pursue music, by my amazing teachers at school, so it occupies a special place in my heart nonetheless. As for my Polish heritage, I have to say it is not something I feel I know very much about at the moment, but I plan to investigate it much more and hope to learn more about Polish music itself. That said, I have always found that I have a particular affinity with European jazz and folk music, so perhaps that has something to do with it!

About your playing - as a (not very articulate) alto sax player myself and being around some of the best jazz players for the last 30 years - I know how much practice and shedding playing to your level takes. A difficult question but, do you think this kind of discipline becomes habitual if one is in the right environment and given the opportunity or do you think that a particular personality trait or traits determine this kind of discipline and determination (I'm not suggesting for one minute, that any of this makes one a better person or even a superior artist but, as someone who knew that that discipline was not "in me" I'm fascinated by the subject - so indulge me if you will or care to).

I think that the right way to practise is different for everyone. I am lucky in the respect that I find it quite easy to stay motivated and become absorbed in my practice, which I know is not the case for everybody. I do think it is possible to learn discipline and also (more importantly) work out what works best for you as an individual. For some people the best approach simply won't be locking themselves in a practice room for hours, and might include more time spent listening to music or going to hear live gigs. The fundamental thing for me is finding out how to stay inspired and excited about what we do, and remember that music isn't sport: instead of trying to "win a race" it's more important to play music in an inspired, creative and honest way.

Finally - though you've not been on the planet for too long and though you are growing up in more egalitarian times and with many more opportunities for women - how do you see the future for women in jazz and how do you see their role in it; both playing and business wise?

I think that there is still a lot that needs to change in the environment for women working in the jazz industry -- but it is a process that I am sure is in progress as we speak. Thanks to many hugely supportive and inclusive musicians on the scene, many of whom I have been lucky to play with, I personally don't often feel out of place when playing at a gig or even sitting in on a jam session, which is certainly a massive step forward. For me the goal is to walk into a playing or music business situation and to feel comfortable and respected, regardless of the gender split in the room.

Oh, one more..... And one I always ask (out of sheer nosiness) when a song on an album is dedicated to someone in particular. Who's Vera?

Vera was my grandmother -- she was a huge inspiration to me not just musically but in life, and one of the loveliest and most caring people I have had the pleasure of knowing. Naturally I still miss her a lot, but writing a tune for her and not just playing it on gigs but knowing that the music is available for anybody anywhere in the world to enjoy, seems like a fitting tribute.

To support Emma's work, please visit her website here

EMMA RAWICZ



Photo by Monika S Jakubowska











Born in Rwanda, raised in Belgium, now living in the UK. Ineza's unique past and present is one explanation for her intriguing and daring mix of Jazz and Neo Soul music. Ineza's 2018 debut EP 'Where are you from' received praise from Bandcamp Daily and Fresh on the Net establishing her as a unique singer and composer dedicated to the art of storytelling. Since the release Ineza has been supported by international music producer, promotor and organizer Serious and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Ineza is currently touring with award winner singer - songwriter Tom Odell.

In 2015 Ineza accepted a place at the prestigious Trinity Laban conservatoire of Music and Dance. Before moving to London she studied Jazz at the Maastricht Conservatoire in The Netherlands. Since graduating Ineza has become a prominent performer and educator on the London Jazz scene. Ineza is part of the critically acclaimed London Vocal Project, She holds a residency at Oliver's Jazz bar in Greenwich and she's a vocal tutor at ACM.

I really enjoyed listening to this, your second EP. There is very clearly a theme throughout relating to identity and to your own personal journey. Tell us a little about that story and a little more about the title track "Who Am I".

My music so far has been autobiographical. I was born in Rwanda but before the age of one, my biological mother gave me up for adoption. A white Belgian family raised me and for the most part of my childhood I knew very little about Rwanda or my biological family. Around the age of 16, I reconnected with my biological mother and a few years later I travelled to Rwanda to meet her, my 6 siblings and other family members for the first time.

This experience has made a significant impression on me. The title track 'Who Am I' is about that first meeting with my mother. It's about the anticipation, all the unanswered questions and how this meeting will change my life and redefine who I am.

I know that you studied at Trinity Laban. Tell us a little about your studies there and a little more about your musical journey and jazz education previous to being in London.

I truly enjoyed my time at Trinity Laban. I learned a lot, got to know my band members and so many other fantastic musicians. Before Trinity I studied Jazz vocals at Maastricht Conservatoire in the Netherlands. I got into Jazz music in a somewhat strange fashion.

Growning up I spent a lot of time with my uncle on my mother's side. He was a huge classical music fan. My mother preferred Andrea Bocelli and Enya. As a young person I listened to American R&B, hip hop and would become obsessed with musical theatre. Which prompted me to change schools to study acting and hopefully make it my career. I lived in a boarding school at the time. A caretaker there, heard me sing in the hallway on a daily basis. She suggested I should look into Jazz music. I did and the rest is history.

You label yourself as a singer of Neo-Soul and R&B though in this EP I hear in the compositions and in your sweet and clear tone, strains of folk and country. What singers and musicians or bands have you been influenced by?

I have to thank the London Vocal Project for the folk and country undertones. We did a project focussing on the music of James Taylor, I hadn't really explored his music before, but he has become one of my influences. Other musicians that influenced me are Esperanza Spalding, Lauryn Hill, Stevie Wonder and the Jazz singer Nancy Wilson.

Considering your background and education in jazz it is only natural that you would be working with the finest of our young jazz musicians - notably the pianist Deschanel Gordon and the saxophonist Michael lack, with whom you seem to have a brilliantly compatible musical relationship. What is your history with these musicians and why did you choose to work with them in particular?

I met Deschanel at Trinity, he came in 2 years after me. It was clear from the very beginning not only is he a lovely human being, he's also a killer pianist. When I started my band, I was looking for versatile musicians and he was one of the first people I asked.

I met Michael at Oliver's Jazz bar, at the time I ran the Monday Jazz Jam and he used to come down. I really liked his playing cause it's different. He has this amazing ability to come up with the most beautiful melodies without looking at the chords. He understood my story and knew how to accompany.

A little about a couple of other projects that you're involved in; The London Vocal Project and your residency at Oliver's Jazz Bar let's hear all about these...

The London Vocal Project is a contemporary vocal ensemble specialising in Jazz and groove music. We are led by educator and composer Pete Churchill.

During my time at Trinity, Pete used to come once a year to run a choir workshop. We would sing his arrangements of Jazz, soul or folk tunes and have a performance at the end of the week. For many of us this was an absolute highlight, I was really impressed with Pete's choir leading and arrangement skills. In 2019 I got the chance to join the choir, the first project I did with them was the Miles Ahead album with lyrics by John Hendricks. We only had 3 moths to learn the tunes by heart. It was a baptism by fire due to the complicated rhythms and harmonies, but I've learned a lot from it. I've been in the choir since then.

Oliver's Jazz bar is a lovely underground Jazz venue and wine bar in Greenwich. It's one of my favourite places, I used to go there frequently when I was a student. There's live music every day of the week and plenty of jam sessions. During my final year at Trinity, I had the chance to host a jam session there myself. Running a jam is a great way to develop your stage craft, play with different musicians and learn new repertoire. Now, I host the Sunday Jazz jam every 2nd and 4th Sunday.

As well as being a prominent performer on the London jazz scene you have also become an educator. Tell us about your role as an ACM vocal tutor and how, if at all, this has benefitted your own performance.

I started at ACM in January 2022. As a vocal tutor I help the students with their vocal and performance technique. Being a teacher has been instrumental in my own development as a performer. By helping others, I remind myself how to be a better musician and how important it is to keep practicing. When you've developed a skill for a long time, you sometimes forget about the basics. Teaching reminds you of how important the simple exercises really are. It's an honour to be a part of somebody else's creative journey, it encourages me to keep on developing my own.

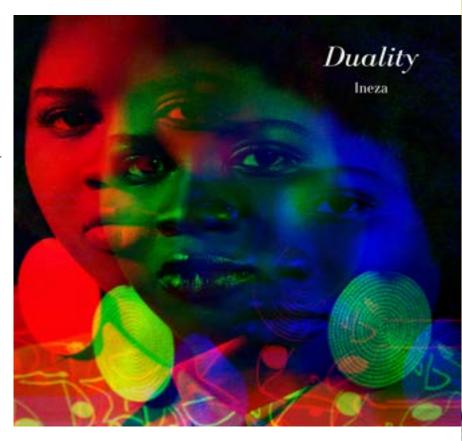
You have been supported by Serious and by The Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Tell us something about this and what your involvement with these organisations entailed.

In 2019 I was awarded a place at the second edition of LEAP, one of Serious artist development programs. I was lucky enough to be one of 8 artists chosen to participate. During a week-long residential at Cats Abbey in Oxfordshire we received support and training in outreach work, work shopping and developing new ways of teaching. After the residency I was put in contact with Norfolk and Norwich Festival to run workshops for disadvantaged children. This proved to be a particular moving and rewarding experience. These children didn't really have any music classes and I'll never forget the joy and excitement they had to learn something new.

And last but last least - when and where is the EP Launch and where are your next few gigs.?

The EP launch will take place at Toulouse Lautrec in London on Saturday January 28th. I have 2 consecutive gigs at the London Jazz Festival, One on Saturday November 19th with my good friend pianist Rob Brockway at Woolwich Works and the day after November 20th at Crazy Cocks with the Alex Webb trio.





I'm doing a couple of Christmas gigs, one with the London Vocal Project on December 4th at Pizza Express Dean Str and the other one with Michael Lack and our trio at Oliver's Jazz bar on December 23rd and of course I'm also hosting the Jazz Jam at Oliver's Jazz bar every 2nd and 4th Sunday, every month.

To support Inezas work, please visit her website here





Photo by Tatiana Gorilovsky



ain't but a few of



black music writers tell willard jenkins their story editor



simply love where the title of this book comes from.

I am neither shocked nor surprised by the fact that there are no black jazz writers writing in very famous jazz UK publications as it is a clear reflection on the jazz industry itself in some ways. If one were to look at the highly successful jazz musicians in the UK, so many of them are white. Whilst that in and of itself is not an issue, one needs to accept therefore that those consistently winning awards year on year for performing jazz/ African-American music are the best at representing that music of black origin. One also needs to consider that these awards are largely by nomination, so are they being nominated by the same people? Or is the public widely consulted: I think not. All of that considered, together with the history of jazz and how it came about, it does strike me as slightly absurd.

It is not a leap then to get to where the writer of this book got to, because as a writer I understand that an article needs to be sold and provide an income for the writers involved. With that in mind, in order to add credibility to their articles in these UK jazz publications, they have to, or feel obliged to, court the names of the award winners referred to above, and/or those whose names readily come to mind, due to the level of publicity these names receive, whether the black music community feel they are worthy or not.

Also, as a black woman in jazz who has supported young jazz musicians by using my influence to fill venues they play at, again, black people behind the scenes are not seen or heard from, and black women behind the scenes, I suspect more so, as they are already marginalised to some degree.

Ultimately, the delivery of quality music of black origin is not about skin colour, it is about ability and authenticity. That said, writing about it is somewhat different as there needs to be a connection with its origin in order to ascertain how authentic a performance actually is.

Aydenne Simone

With this book in mind, we have asked jazz singer/writer Aydenne Simone to take a deeper look at this book. Do the findings in this book reflect the industry black people have come to know and expect? What do we need to do to change the perception of black music journalists/writers? Conduct surveys amongst the black music community in this genre, to ascertain whether black musicians and curators of black musicians have 'ever' been asked for their opinion or input into articles in these well-known UK jazz publications?

Aydenne also opens up revealing anecdotes from white musicians who now have a name on the jazz scene due to Aydenne's intervention, and their responses to some of the very interesting/borderline racist questions put to them during interviews, referencing the involvement of a black woman in their careers.

Stay tuned for our next edition for the full-on review of this incredible book and more, that will open your eyes to the industry we know and love.

In the meantime, here is the link to purchase:

'Aint' But A Few Of Us'

WOMEN IN . IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

MORE THAN A FEW OF US

A new mentoring scheme inspired by Willard Jenkins book:

'AIN'T BUT A FEW OF US'



#knockingdownthedoor

JAZZ MEDIA

BLACK LIVES IN MUSIC



Photo of Camilla George by Monika S Jakubowska

Inspired by Willard Jenkins book 'Ain't But A Few of Us', Women in Jazz Media are launching a new mentoring scheme specifically aimed at increasing the number of black jazz journalists across the world.

Women in Jazz Media is an award winning not for profit organization and although a large amount of their initiatives are focused on platforming women, with the ultimate aim of seeing an equal, diverse and safe jazz industry, this mentoring scheme is open to all genders and applicants can choose to have a male or female mentor.

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 the through the inspirational mentors who are involved.

Willard Jenkins himself is a mentor along with Jordannah Elizabeth and John Murph with more mentors to be announced soon. Women in Jazz Media Founder says 'I cannot believe we have such truly inspirational writers involved in this initiative! It is overwhelming. The wealth of knowledge, experience, and guidance that Willard, Jordannah and John can pass onto potential new writers is truly invaluable. If we hope to see more great black writers, then we must be guided by great black writers'

The book that has inspired this scheme, 'Ain't But A Few of Us', is a dialogue, a collection of monologues, and an anthology of writing on jazz, journalism, race, and gender all in one.

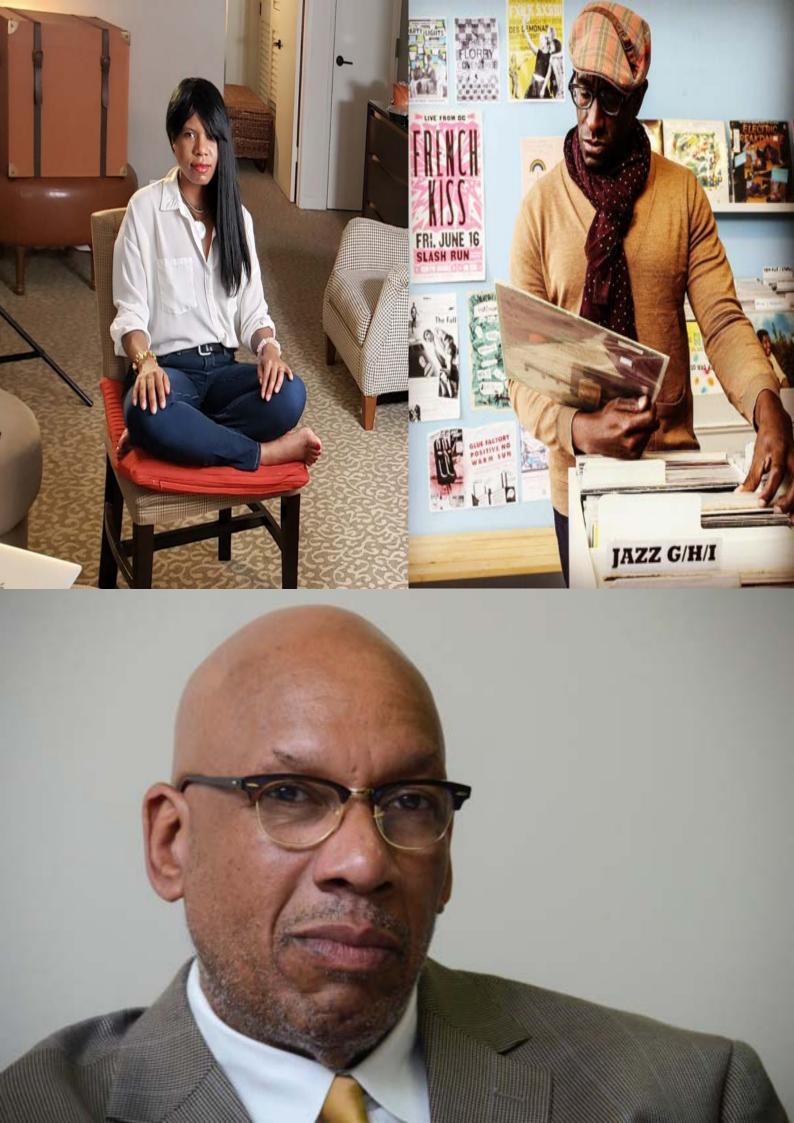
"The goal has been to include Black writers from several different perspectives and stations in the media pursuit," Jenkins explains in his introduction. "This book represents a variety of viewpoints and vantage points, but inevitably the dialogue leads back to considerations of that specious, man-made construct known as race."

The book explores the voices of a wide range of writers - male and female, of different generations, locations, and professional backgrounds and they answer Jenkins's provocative questions about the experience of being a Black music writer, the relative lack thereof, and what that lack means for the music and its audience

More Than A Few of Us is now open for applicants!

To apply, please follow this link

#knockingdownthedoor



The following pages are taken from Kim Cyphers online magazine 'Brighter Tomorrow' which we were very proud and happy to support. A portfolio of work by musicians, venues, performers and artists in celebration of the amazing, creative people who contribute to a **BRIGHTER TOMORROW** for **The Arts.**

Click the magazine cover to view.

'The pride I feel being part of such an amazing, caring community has led me to this project - 'BRIGHTER TOMORROW' - A Tribute to The Arts'

Kim Cypher





LIVE RECORDING & VIDEO WITH LIANE CARROLL AT LONDON'S 606 CLUB

t's good to dream and it's good to reach for the stars. So, this next part of the project fills me with so much joy and pride.

Having recorded an instrumental version of **TOMORROW'S SONG**, I found myself humming along to the melody line and before I knew it, I was releasing poignant emotions, singing along with some heartfelt lyrics. I could feel the passion in every word I sang. Suddenly, I knew I needed to record a vocal version of the song, a stripped-back version, vulnerable and performed with the passion this project deserves. In my mind there was only one lady for the job -

A phenomenal performer, a passionate soul, an inspiration and positive role model for The Arts – the incredible Liane Carroll.

Once that seed was planted, I simply couldn't imagine anyone more perfect to bring my vision to life.

So, *I followed my dream, reached for the stars* and asked Liane if she would record the song with me - just her and me and a whole lot of heart and soul. Guess what? She said YES! This made me very happy indeed. I have had the pleasure of performing with Liane a couple of times before and to have her onboard with this project just felt 'right' and of course a huge honour.

As always though, my vision didn't end there. I was now dreaming even bigger. What if we could video our 'live' performance in one of **London's top jazz venues**, adding yet another element to this celebration of The Arts? Well, as it turned out, I only had to ask and the amazing **606 Club** came straight onboard stating they loved the idea of the project and of course their continued love for Liane made it even more appealing for them.

Huge thanks to Steve Rubie for being so open to the idea and to the 606 Club staff for being so brilliant and helpful.

I am proud to present a short trailer of our version of **TOMORROW'S SONG** performed 'live' at the 606 Club, a song that longs for a **BRIGHTER TOMORROW**, a brighter tomorrow we can just about touch now. **Filmed and recorded by Juanjo Lopez Vidal**. Full video and track release on 24th February 2023.

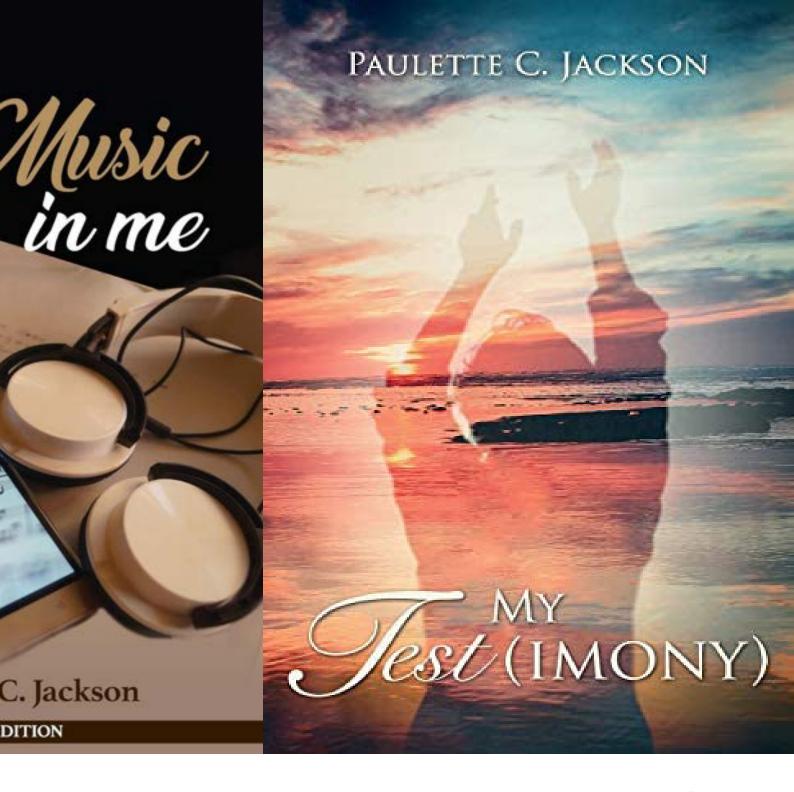
I hope you enjoy!





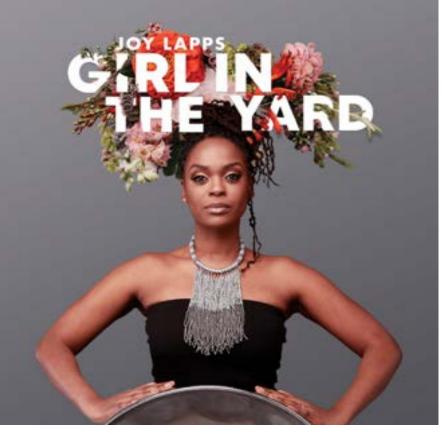


PAULETTE JACKSON



Paulette Jackson, Founder/CEO of SCORP Radio Network and Jazz Zone Radio, host of "The Classic Soul Music Café", "The Jazz Zone" and Center Stage" Internet Radio Shows, Voiceover Artist (my company, Ms. Music's Voice). Published author of the newest release, "My Test(Imony)", "The Music In Me" and "The Music Through the Storm", her current published books were accepted for consideration for the 2020 Author Academy Awards.

Recently, Paulette has started working with several artists on promotions and show bookings. Also, creating several video series and other creative projects including SCORP Lady Ventures. Paulette has been featured in four magazine publications and is currently working on a monthly editorial as well as being a contributing editor for an online magazine publication and contributing writer for a music based magazine. Paulette is a proud member of ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) member as a songwriter and music publishing.



THE POWER BEHIND THE STEELPAN

BY PAULETTE JACKSON

I love it when I come across unique and amazing artists, and this young lady definitely falls into this category. I am speaking of Grammy-nominated, Toronto, Canada native, Joy Lapps. Now, my knowledge of Ms. Lapps was that of being the wife of drummer, composer extraordinaire, Larnell Lewis (Snarky Puppy) and knew she was an artist herself, but I had no idea to what degree until I heard her new release, "Girl in The Yard" (July 2022)!

Note: Now, I am not writing this necessarily as a review but as an admiration in tribute to the true artistry of Ms. Joy Lapps and my appreciation for the real heart and soul I feel she exudes.

When I tell you I have listened to this one a couple times, I truly mean that. This project is so wonderfully produced and written and of course Mr. Lewis lends his gifts as well (as it should be). I have heard the steelpan instrument used in other musical recordings and live shows but none on this level before. Ms. Lapps, along with the other wonderful musicians (yes actual musicians) taking us on a Caribbean journey through her music. Joy makes the Steelpan sing.

Ms. Lapps is not only a wonderful artist and composer but, also an educator, involved in varied community education programming. Joy Lapps is one to watch, beauty and grace along wit h powerhouse skills as a musician, businessperson, mother, and wife, she is doing it all quite well.

I have taken a listen to some of her other works, which are available on all digital platforms. These works, especially her newest release, "Girl in The Yard" is one that should be added to your music collection, it is pure fire!

I am a new fan of Ms. Lapps and sorry it took me awhile to deeply appreciate her wonderful gift, I am naming her the "Steelpan Princess," but it goes so far beyond that....

To learn more about Ms. Joy Lapps music and upcoming tour dates (including her music partner and husband Larnell Lewis) please visit her website: www.joylapps.com





IT'S A HALIE THING!

BY
PAULETTE
JACKSON

Ms. Halie can sing anything from Pop to Classic Jazz and delivers it all with grace and style. Who am I speaking of? None other than Halie Loren, singer hailing from Sitka, Alaska. She has one of those voices that can go from Broadway to the swankiest jazz clubs worldwide. Speaking of which, I am sitting here, as I write this, listening to two of her latest releases from her "Live at Cotton Club" (July 22, 2022) ~ "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing" and Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby", two of the best jazz classics in my opinion, Halie takes us back to the smooth, cool sounds of jazz and the Cotton Club in New York City!

I love the sound of real music instruments used on this project, Halie did not steer far from the original arrangements and the musicians on these tracks sound like she went back to the fifties and placed them in the studio just for this wonderful project!

Halie of course, has a plethora of other music under her belt such as her 2018 CD, "From the Wild Sky" (April 2018) that I urge you all to check out as well. One of my favorites from this album is "Paper Man," a soulful groove and funky instrumentation. Halie's execution on this one does not disappoint.

I have been following Ms. Halie Loren for a few years and wanted to share her wonderful voice and music with those of you that may not be familiar with her works (you are now). Halie is one to watch out for. I encourage you all to listen and add Halie Loren to your music collection, what a pure gem she is.

To learn more about Halie, show dates and all her wonderful music, visit her website at: www. halieloren.com





PAULETTE JACKSON INTERVIEWS

MARILYN SCOTT

A native of southern California, vocalist Marilyn Scott counts among her earliest influences, artists Aretha Franklin, Donny Hathaway, Etta James, Jean Carn and Andy Bey. She began performing in local clubs and fronted soul-jazz bands around the San Francisco Bay area. Among the many friends she made were the guys of Tower of Power, who gave her the opportunity to do backing session vocals with the Oakland-based band. Those recording sessions steered her to making her way back to Los Angeles as a studio session singer, where she performed with musicians and groups including Spyro Gyra, Yellowjackets, Hiroshima, John Mayall, Etta James, Bobby Caldwell and Bobby Womack. Scott's first recording in 1977, as a solo artist, was a single version of Brian Wilson's "God Only Knows", which led to her first album, Dreams of Tomorrow, on Atco/Atlantic. Her discography continued with, 1983 Without Warning, Polygram, 1991 and 1992 Sin-Drome recordings, Smile and Sky Dancing. 1996 and 1998 Warner Bros. releases of Take Me with You and Avenues of Love. The Japanese Venus Records recording, Every Time We Say Goodbye, in 2008.

Marilyn moved to Prana Entertainment and released from 2001 to 2017, Walking With Strangers, Nightcap, Handpicked, Innocent of Nothing, Get Christmas Started and Standard Blue in 2017. Her 2022 release on Blue Canoe Records marks her most recent release, The Landscape.

She has combined her interest in neo-soul, jazz and Brazilian music. She has collaborated with Dori Caymmi, George Duke, Russell Ferrante, Bob James, Jimmy Haslip, Brenda Russell, Bob Mintzer, Perri Sisters, Terri Lyne Carrington, Patrice Rushen and Scott Kinsey.

Marilyn is best known for her Grammy-nominated work as a contemporary jazz vocalist and singer songwriter. As the years have progressed, she has dived deeper into jazz writing and interpretations. Collaborations with many acclaimed artists and musicians have opened and widened her range in a music that's rich in texture and complexity.







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 \bf{here}









The Ostara Project – The Ostara Project Cellar Music – 2022

The Ostara Project is a Canadian collective of stellar musicians, and have released this eponymously titled album this year. The group is led by bassist Jodi Proznick and pianist Amanda Tosoff. The album consists of mainly original compositions (which I always gravitate to for airplay!). Also on the album are Allison Au (sax), Sanah Kadoura (drums), Jocelyn Gould (guitar), Joanna Majoko (vox) and Rachel Therrien (trumpet). The album was released on Cory Weed's wonderful Cellar Music label out of Vancouver, B.C. – and I have to say it sounds terrific! Wonderful compositions, performances; and well-engineered, mixed and mastered.

One of the real pleasant surprises of 2022. Check it out!

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about The Ostara Project









Connie Han – "The Secrets of Inanna" Mack Avenue Records – 2022

Pianist Connie Han is back with a new album, "Secrets of Inanna". Her third for Mack Avenue records, it serves as a showcase for her prodigious keyboard talents as well as her gifted compositional skills. Her compositions are based around an ancient Sumerian goddess, so there is a conceptual connection throughout the album. I've been going back to this one periodically on my program on SoulandJazz.com. A real plus for me is her Fender Rhodes playing on 3 tracks – she really understands the nuances and differences in playing the Rhodes vs. acoustic piano. Ms. Han's interest in fashion can often draw attention - there is a YouTube video of her playing in 10" platform heels without missing a beat! - however this should not overshadow her amazing technical skill, including great left-hand right-hand independence, and her harmonic sophistication and melodic lyricism. Mack Avenue was smart to sign her. Also features producer Bill Wysaske on drums, John Patitucci on bass, Katisse Buckingham on flute and piccolo, Rich Perry on tenor.

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Connie Han



ANA NELSON

BR



IDGES





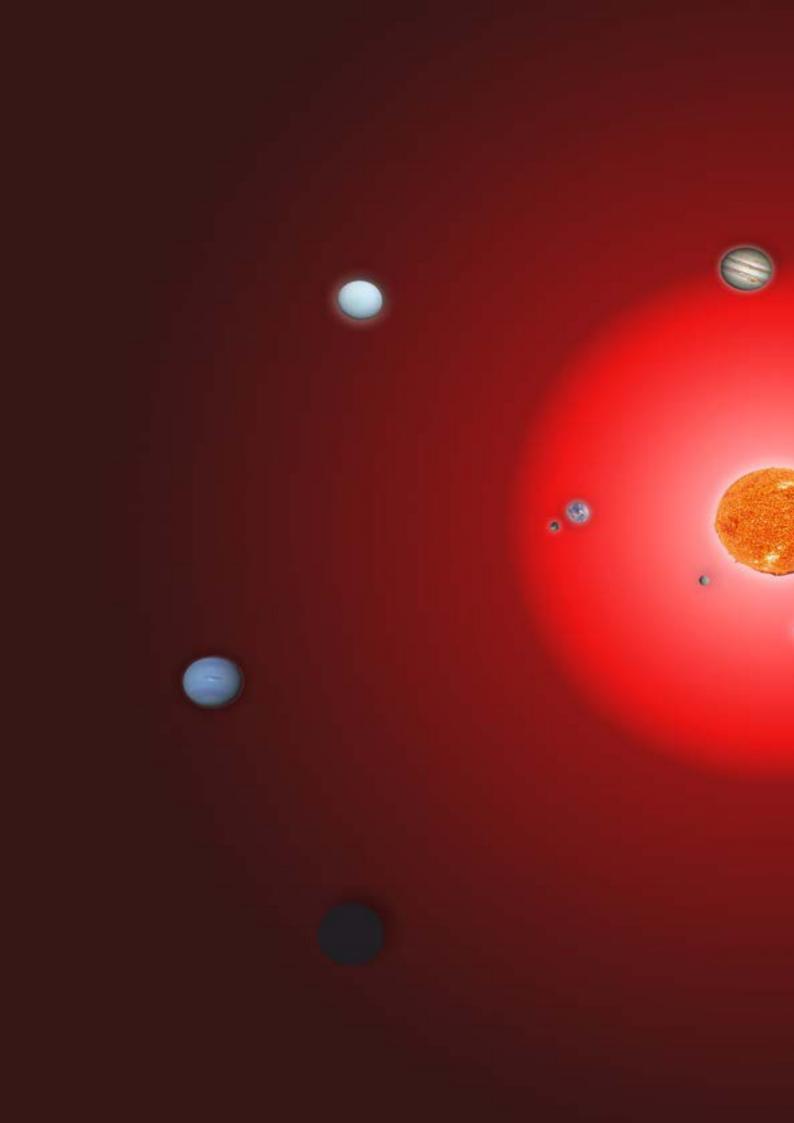
Ana Nelson – Bridges Ana Nelson Music – 2022

Ana Nelson is a young alto player from Bloomington, IN. "Bridges", her debut full album, is comprised entirely of her own impressive and highly melodic compositions. She is accompanied by a group of artists all also associated with the Jacob School of Music at Indiana University (one of my alma maters!). She possesses a remarkable pure tone on the alto saxophone – quite possibly a result of her classical training. But she can seriously blow and improvise when the occasion calls for it! The first time I played her on the air, I announced her as an alto player, and of course I ended up playing a track on which she played clarinet (equally adeptly, I might add).

I expect that we'll hear a great deal more from this up-and-comer.

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Ana Nelson



REBECCA COUPE FRANKS





WITH

LUIS PERDOMO
LARRY GRENADIER
& JOHNATHAN BLAKE



Rebecca Coupe Franks - Planets RCF

I've been a big fan of trumpeter Rebecca Coupe Franks, going back to her Justice Records release in 1992 (which we played the heck out of at my former radio station, KSJS-FM, San Jose!). That record featured Buster Williams on bass, Kenny Barron on drums, and Joe Henderson on sax (whom she worked closely with) – impressive quartet! Therefore I'm delighted that she has come out with a new album going back to her jazz quartet format – this time and equally stellar quartet with Larry Grenadier on bass, Luis Perdomo on piano and Johnathan Blake on drums! The album consists of all her own compositions, inspired by the planets in our solar system.

If you haven't heard Rebecca previously, this is a great place to start!

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Rebecca Coupe Franks







Roberta Piket - You've Been Warned Sunnyside Records - 2022

Roberta is a pianist (also a noted organist and vocalist) whom I've been following for many years, and have enjoyed playing on the radio immensely and introducing her to a wider audience. "You've Been Warned" is not your standard piano trio doing standards. It consists of original compositions by all 3 members of the band – Billy Mintz on drums and Harvie S on bass, joining Roberta. The compositions are full of rich harmonic structure and there is a simpatico between the 3 artists that doesn't simply come about based upon one recording session. The compositions can be progressive and complex, and yet highly melodic and beautiful. Perhaps Roberta's best work yet. Thank goodness that record labels like Sunnyside still exist that allow artists to do their own music unfettered, and expose listeners to music that might otherwise go unheard. "Artists who deserve wider recognition" has become a hackneyed phrase, yet I'm going to use it here, because it fits so well.

The piano trio is one of my favorite instrumental formats – and this is a trio not to be missed!

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Roberta



LAUREN HENDERSON







Lauren Henderson – La Bruja Brontosaurus Records – 2022

Vocalist Lauren Henderson continues to dive deeply into her Central American and Afro-Caribbean roots with her latest, "La Bruja". A mix of Latin American standards along with her own originals, she has carefully crafted a mixture of songs that focus on the trials and tribulations of African diaspora in the Americas. The Spanish lyrics provide the contrast and irony that I believe she tries to highlight – and it is effective.

Another hauntingly beautiful release by a singular artist.

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Lauren Henderson



CARMEN LUNDY







Carmen Lundy – Fade to Black Afrasia Productions – 2022

Carmen Lundy is often referred to as a vocalist, but in fact she is also a multi-instrumentalist, composer, arranger, producer – she does it all! Her latest album was conceived during the lockdown years of the pandemic, and reflects upon the social issues of the times and was no doubt greatly influenced by the necessity of sheltering in place. "Fade to Black" features Carmen on a variety of instruments, but this time she has hired a cracking band to help interpret and augment her new compositions. Joining Ms. Lundy are Matthew Whitaker, Terreon Gully, Kenny Davis, Julius Rodriguez, Camille Thurman, Andrew Renfroe, Wallace Roney, Jr., and Giveton Gelin. Of course, her brother, legendary bassist Curtis Lundy, appears as well.

A new Carmen Lundy album is always something to look forward to!

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Carmen Lundy









Amina Figarova – Joy AMFI Records – 2022

One of my favorite jazz composers over the years is Amina Figarova. I always eagerly anticipate a new release from her – anxious to hear what kind of group she's put together to interpret her latest compositions. A stellar pianist, originally from Azerbaijan and now a New York City mainstay, she is once again joined by her ever-present husband, flautist Bart Platteau, along with long-time associate Wayne Escoffery on tenor. This time, Amina is also joined by Alex Pope Norris on trumpet, Yasushi Nakamura on bass, and Rudy Royston and Brian Richburg, Jr. on the drums. Vocalist Sasha Masakowski provides a hauntingly beautiful performance on "October Phantasy". Amina's music is always infectiously melodic, and expertly performed.

I don't "give stars", but this one would get as many as I could give!

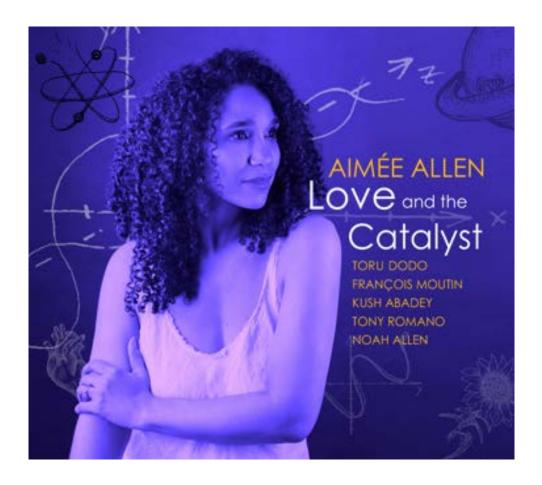
Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Amina









Aimée Allen – Love & the Catalyst Azuline – 2022

From past releases, we know Aimée (pronounced like 'Amy') has a beautiful voice with great intonation. With "Love & the Catalyst", we see her taking a huge step forward as an artist. The album is comprised of mostly her own compositions, along with numbers by Freddie Hubbard, Chick Corea and Fahir Atakoglu – which all seem to fit coherently in the mix. A stunningly gorgeous album, enhanced by an expertly engineered mix and mastering. A couple of standout tracks for me: "Quantum Entanglements" (had to play that one first on my show, as a physicist!), and "Mortally Immortal", based upon a Mozart requiem. Her long time musical partner François Moutin is here on bass, and the wonderful pianist Todo Doro is an integral part of this project, along with Kush Abadey (drums), Tony Romano (guitar) and her nephew Noah Allen very capably on the trumpet.

Highly recommended.

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Aimee





GELICA ZTRIO ORMANEK YHART Beings

Angelica Sanchez Trio - Sparkle Beings Sunnyside - 2022

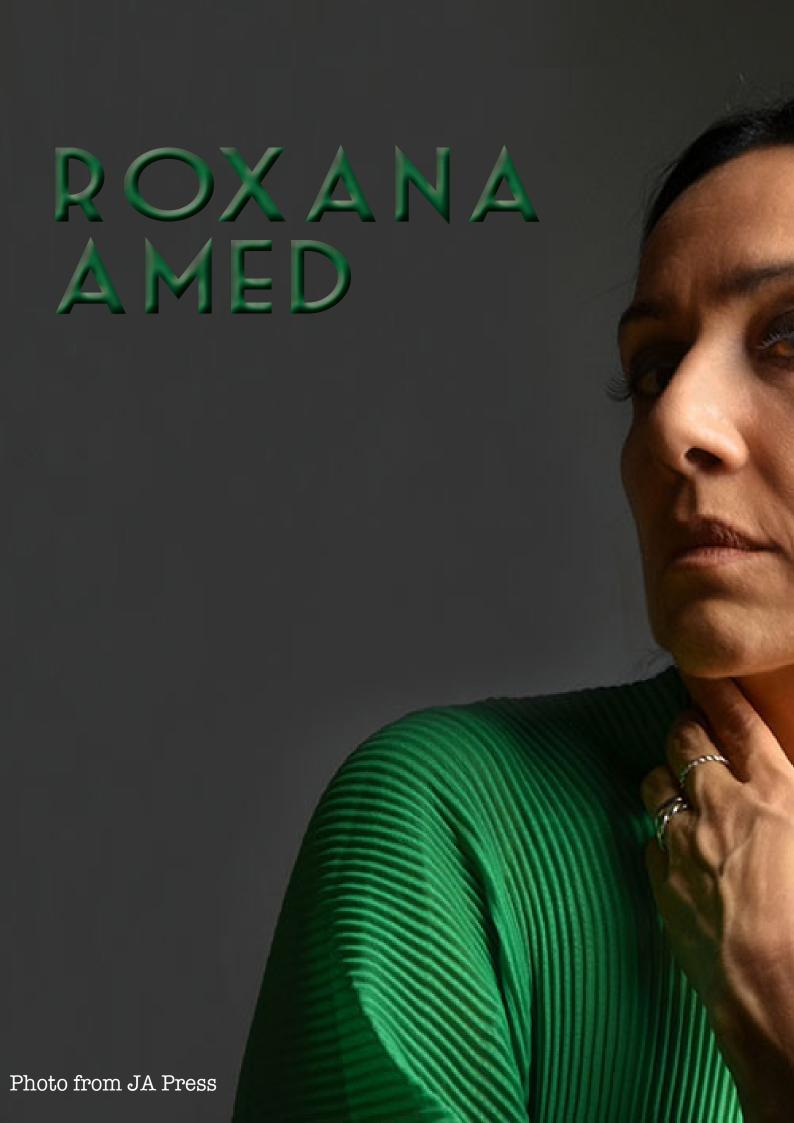
Another piano trio record that is not about standard standards – more kudos to François Zalarcain and all at Sunnyside Records for allowing this incredibly creative and captivating pianist "do her thing". Compositions by Mary Lou Williams, Duke Ellington, Mario Ruiz Armengol and Cecil Taylor are deftly performed and interpreted, along with material by Angelica and the group. Her trio is rounded out by Bill Hart on drums and Michael Formanek on bass – it doesn't get any better than that, and they are the perfect foil for Angelica's sometimes angular and complex, and often lush and highly melodic playing. Sensitively performed.

I'm very happy to now know about her - give this one a spin!



Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Angelica







Roxana Amed - Unánime -Sony Music Latin - 2022

With Argentina advancing to the World Cup as I write these notes, perhaps it's doubly a propos to mention vocalist and native Argentine Roxana Amed, and her stunning new release Unánime. When her debut album "Ontology" was released last year, I was very taken by her sheer musicality – apparently many others were as well, as the album picked up 2 Grammy nominations. With her sophomore release, influences from Cuba, Peru, the Middle East, Spain and Portugal, Venezuela and Colombia permeate the soundscape. Along with pianist and arranging partner Martin Bejerano, Ms. Amed challenges the listener with any preconceived notions as to just what Latin music, and particularly Latin jazz, is. Appearances by maestro Chucho Valdes, Australian guitarist Tim Jago, Cuban-American Dafnis Prieto, Chico Pinheiro from Brasil, Pedro Aznar from her own native Argentina, amongst others, help to get the message across. The group tackles a number of composers from around South and Latin America, and even a Miles Davis number.

I already eagerly anticipate her next album!

Click here to buy

Click here to find out more about Roxana

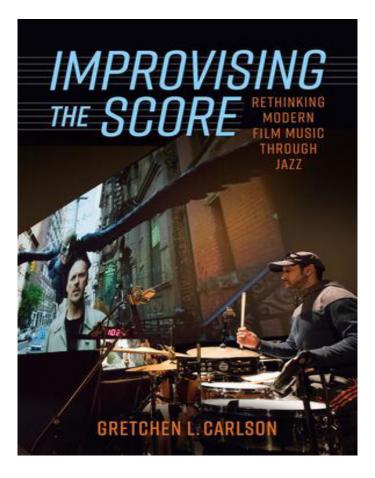
ON THE BOCKCASE

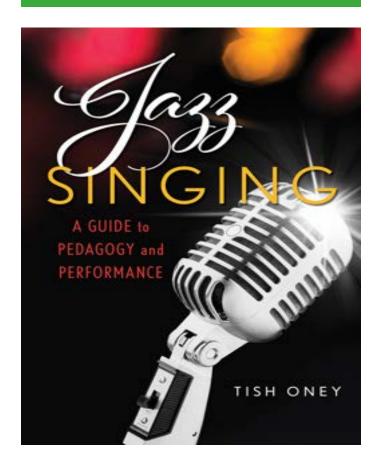
A platform for female authors across the world through our "On The Bookcase" features, showcasing 75 books written by women.



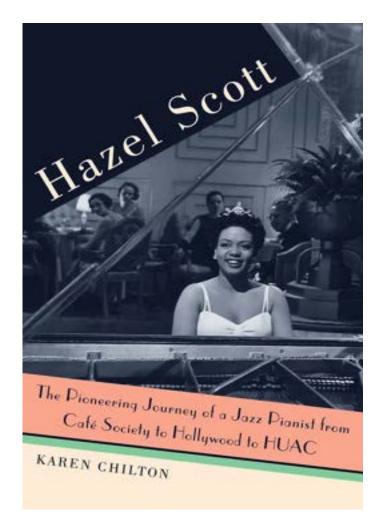


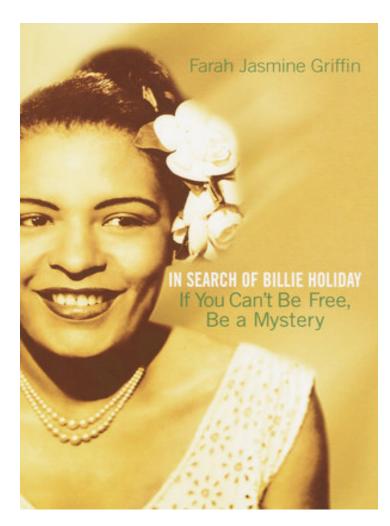
Edited by James Reddan, Monika Herzig, and Michael Kahr

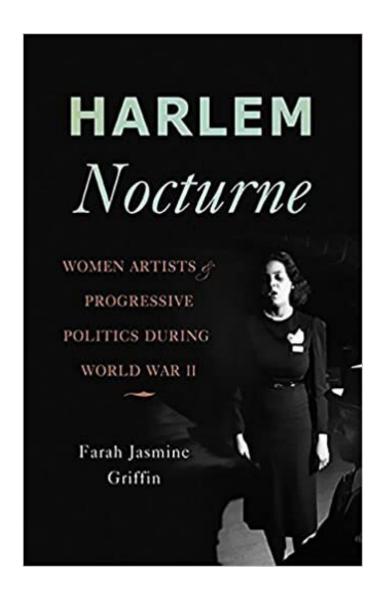


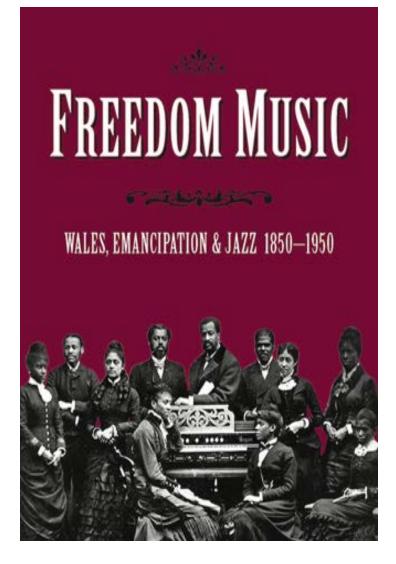












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BARNES CODE

We would also like to take the opportunity to thank our new sponsor Barnes Code, for their very generous donation. This new sponsorship presents some great opportunities and will have a considerable impact on our work.

Barnes Code specialises in bespoke software development and we look forward to working together on many initiatives.

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Get in touch with us if you are interested in becoming a sponsor sponsorship@womeninjazzmedia.com



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Photo by Monika Jakubowska