

Amandah Jantzen – Northern Star: The Singapore Sessions (2007)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 01 December 2013 15:51 -

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*01. Sequined Mermaid Dress (3:04) 02. Lady Wants To Know (5:00) 03. Social Call (2:03)
04. The Night We Called It A Day (4:45) 05. All Or Nothing At All / Stolen Moments (4:34) 06.
Northern Star (4:31) 07. Willow Weep For Me (4:09) 08. Bye Bye Country Boy (4:50) 09. (I'm
Just) Foolin' Myself (3:28) 10. You Don't Know What Love Is (2:39) 11. There's No Such Thing
As Love (5:01) 12. Ev'rything I've Got (2:45) 13. We'll Be Together Again (5:10)*

Lighting up Singapore's stage this Sunday is Northern Star, Amandah Jantzen, who was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area but counts Portland as her current home-base. Accompanied by some of Singapore's finest professionals such as Mario Serio and Wei Xiang on Piano, Christy Smith on Bass and Jimmy Lee on Drums, this is certainly a Jazz event to look forward to !

Jazz and popular music are overloaded with "overnight successes" who gain a great deal of attention when they burst upon the scene, only to slip away into obscurity within a short time. Amandah Jantzen is the complete opposite. Throughout her career she has gradually earned a strong reputation while mastering her craft. She is a singer who, once experienced, one never forgets.

Amandah has the rare ability to uplift standards and make vintage songs sound fresh, new and topical. Her warm voice and swinging style, combined with a large repertoire, result in consistently memorable performances. She is never shy to embrace melodies and lyrics from the Great American Songbook, bringing out the hidden beauty in both, but her renditions are never predictable. She is a jazz singer yet also quite accessible to a wide audience.

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Amandah was drawn to music from an early age. Although she occasionally performed at jam sessions and in piano bars, she primarily worked outside of the music industry until 1986. By then, having discovered in turn Al Jarreau, Linda Ronstadt's Nelson Riddle recordings, Nancy Wilson and Sarah Vaughan, Amandah knew that she simply had to sing jazz. She relocated to Portland, Oregon five years later and became active locally, performing in jazz clubs and at concerts. She was particularly inspired by bassist Leroy Vinnegar and guitarist Charlie Byrd, developing into the warm and highly expressive singer that she is today. Byrd convinced Amandah that she should accompany herself on piano, a move which has added to the appeal and musicality of her performances.

Amandah Jantzen's singing is well showcased on her three recordings, *Some Other Time*, *Devil May Care* and *My Secret Love*. She is also featured on a third of the songs on the *Ellen Vanderslice* compilation, *Once in A Blue Moon*, and half of the tunes on *The Standard Vanderslice*. Her newest CD, *Northern Star/The Singapore Sessions* was released in mid-2007. Because of the quality of these recordings and the popularity of her live engagements, I have picked Amandah as one of the top 500 jazz singers of all time and have included her in my book, *The Jazz Singers*, published by Backbeat Books in October, 2008.

In addition to working in Portland (including long-term bookings at both the Doubletree and Heathman Hotels), Amandah has performed at extended engagements in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, at the Salishan Golf Resort on the Oregon Coast, at the Stone Harbor Resort in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, and at the historic Ankeny's Restaurant atop the Ridpath Hotel in Spokane, Washington. She has also been featured as a soloist at the Du Maurier Jazz Festival in Vancouver, British Columbia; in Florida with tenor-saxophonist Turk Mauro and multi-instrumentalist Ira Sullivan, at Bally's Casino in Las Vegas, and has opened concerts for both Mc Coy Tyner and Charlie Byrd. She has been steadily building a growing following in Key West, Florida as well over the past few years.

Internationally, she's worked two engagements in Singapore, with multiple extensions that kept her busy for 15 months, culminating in the recording of her most recent (*Northern Star*) CD. Continuing her tour of Asia, she then performed extended bookings in Seoul, South Korea; Bali, Indonesia; New Delhi, India; Shanghai, China; Bangkok, Thailand; Hanoi, Vietnam; and most recently, The Maldives.. Additionally, in early 2008, she was featured in the Emirates Air Jazz Vocal Concert Series at Nardis Jazz Club in Istanbul, Turkey.

In early 2006 she placed second in the 5th Annual Jazz Connect International Vocal Competition. She has also developed a steady base of "House Concert" appearances in the US as well as working several jazz venues inbetween her long term bookings in Asia.

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An enthusiastic and charismatic performer who is also subtle, Amandah Jantzen is a constant joy, both musically and personally. She is on her way to becoming a major name in the overlapping worlds of jazz, cabaret and classic American pop music. --- singaporejazz.com

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