

PUBLICITY WORKSHOP

1. The truth about journalists

- What kind of people are we?
- Why do we do what we do? An inclination that turns into an aptitude
- What's the difference between editors, staff writers, columnists, and freelancers?
- Between those who work for dailies, weeklies, and music magazines?
- How do we get our assignments?
- What is a "pitch"?
- What are the difficulties of our job?
- How much mail and email do we get?
- What do we earn?
- And, most importantly, what do we like?

2. How to increase your contact with writers

- **READ** (or at least skim while sipping lattes at Barnes & Noble)!!!
Increase your contact with writers in print first. It is important to find out which magazines and columns within magazines contain certain types of coverage: previews, live reviews, CD reviews, profiles, news stories, industry news, educational pieces, etc.
- You will want to become familiar with the names of writers who are likely to cover you. Consider approaching those who have written favorably about artists who are similar to you or who have written favorably about a band of which you are a member.
- Collect the names of writers and add them to your database. Find a way to identify them as writers in your files.
- Join the Jazz Journalists' Association. Musicians may join as associate members and then gain access to its complete membership list (www.jazzhouse.org).
- Get a sense of the faces that go with the names by attending lectures (at the New School, Lincoln Center), book signings (check Oxford University Press, Lincoln Center Barnes & Noble), CD releases (often marked on club calendars), classes, and other events. Also, check to find out if writers are in the audiences of musical events you attend.
- Writing for hire vs. on assignment: Hiring someone to write your bio, a press release, or your liner notes may give you access to additional contacts, feedback, and advice. Be aware of conflicts of interest.

- Approach specific writers through the editorial departments of publications: Many will not divulge contact information for their writers, but will forward correspondence to them if you request it (a common practice at *Jazz Times*).
- Write something yourself: from letters to the editor to having your own column.
- NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK! Always carry business cards, CD, press package, etc. Not just to your gigs.

3. Communication in the electronic age

- Most writers prefer contact by email. It just makes life easier for us.
- In this age of viruses, some writers may delete emails from recipients who are not known to them or clearly identified. Therefore, make sure your email provides a clear indication as to who you are before it is opened. This means that your name – both first and last – rather than your address should appear as the sender of the message. Besides, it is better to have writers to remember your name rather than your address.
- In any case, it is to your advantage to have an email address without the word “jazz” in it. This will separate you from 99% of those sending gig emails and distinguish your address.
- If you have multiple email addresses, be consistent in which address you use for each purpose (personal, business, gig emails, etc.). Update your contact information as needed.
- Choose a subject line that clearly indicates the purpose of your email (i.e. gig info, CD release info, pitch letter, etc.) For gig announcements, it is helpful to listing editors if you indicate the date and location in the subject heading.
- Make sure you include all relevant information: for gigs, this is date, time, location, price, fellow performers, in this order. (Date and time are most essential and should appear up front.) Keep a checklist for this info and double check before sending.
- Proofread carefully and spell check messages.
- Always blind copy emails to a group. If you for some reason, you forget to do this, it’s best not to send out an apology to everyone on your list. This only draws attention to the mistake. Express apologies to any individuals who express concerns.
- The SHORT LIST of DON’Ts:
 - >Choose a background color or use any format that some may not be able to read.
 - >Make the font so large that the reader can’t see the heading of the email in a small window.
 - >Send unsolicited attachments—especially large attachments. They cry for immediate deletion.

>Do not steal writers' addresses from other lists. Ask permission to add them. This gives you an excuse for contact with the writer and establishes that you are a polite, considerate sort of person, the kind we like to deal with.

4. Contact on the phone and in the flesh

- Follow-up emails with phone calls if possible and/or appropriate. Remember: the burden of contact is on you. Writers may need a little bit of prodding to get to your material.
- The difficulty of making phone calls by yourself: find a friend with whom to share the responsibility or trade with. Also consider adopting a pseudonym.
- Find an "assistant" to make phone calls for you. This may be a friend, student (who you could reward with free lessons), a devoted fan (who could get comped for your gigs in exchange), or a young professional interested in a career in PR.
- Know where you are calling the journalist (work, at a day job, at home) and respect that environment. Also know the time zone.
- Adopt a friendly, but neutral professional tone. Arguing or being confrontational doesn't get you anywhere. Neither does being overly friendly.
- Use neutral language. "Are you going to write something?" vs. "Let me know if you'd like to write something." "I'd like to add you to my mailing list/send you a copy of my demo" vs. "Would you mind if I add you to my mailing list/send you a copy of my demo?"
- Comp writers to hear you perform when possible, even if they don't have an immediate writing project. This will encourage them to come hear you and open the door for them to cover you at some point in the future.
- The fine line between being pesky and persistent: If the writer hasn't responded after one or two emails and one or two phone calls, move on. Leave it open for them to contact you if they would like to.
- Disguise your reminders.
- Three points to remember:
If you haven't heard back from us, you aren't necessarily being dodged.
We can't always tell you if we'll be able to cover something.
We can't do anything for you if you don't provide the information that is asked for. Preferably just the information that is asked for.

5. Media outlets and building the press kit

- Retail websites for purchase of CDs: Amazon.com, CDBaby.com (check out the great "For Musicians" section). Make sure you have reviews posted there!

- Webzines: allaboutjazz.com, jazzreview.com, jerryjazzmusician.com, justjazz.com, ejazznews.com, jazzusa.com, jazzweekly.com, jazzcorner.com, jazznewyork.org, newmusicbox.org.
- Newsletters: Cobi Narita's Universal Jazz Coalition, 'FYI' (from the New York Foundation for the Arts). Plus the newsletter of any organization of which you are a member.
- University newspapers, their radio stations, and alumni magazines.
- City jazz guides: *Hot House*, *All About Jazz* (new print version).
- New York City papers: free neighborhood papers (*East Sider*, *West Sider*, *Villager*, etc.), *Resident*, *the Onion*, *New York Press*, *Amsterdam News*, *Time Out*, *Village Voice*. Start by trying to get into the weekly listings. This may take a number of attempts.
- Instrument specific journals: *Just Jazz Guitar*, *Saxophone Journal*, *Wind Player*, *Brass Player*, *Keyboard*, *Singer* (www.singermagazine.com), etc.
- Educational journals: International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) journal, Music Educators National Conference (MENC) Journal.
- Jazz Magazines: *DownBeat*, *Jazz Times*, *Jazziz*, *Cadence*, *Jazz Improv*.
- TV: Manhattan cable access, NY1.
- Do web searches for local papers wherever you are traveling or ask those who work at the venues where you are booked to perform.

6. Collecting the Materials

- Make sure to follow-up! Collect copies of the fruits of your labor.
- If you are touring, try to identify someone who can purchase local papers and mail them to you after the date. Offer to pay for the papers and postage. Better yet, bring self-addressed envelopes.
- If you're performing on a gig or CD with someone else as a leader, ask the leader about any resulting press in which you may have been mentioned. If the gig or CD has a publicist, get in direct contact with him or her.
- Keep an organized file by date of all your original clippings.
- Photocopy originals to make paste-ups rather than cutting up originals if copy quality allows.
- Keep a duplicate folder in an alternate location in case of fire, flood, or an act of God.

THE PRESS KIT

There is no single, correct way to put together a press kit. Be creative! The style can aesthetically reflect the artist and project it represents.

Putting it together

- Have a logo and create collateral materials: matching letterhead, mailing labels, return address stickers, postcards, thank you notes. Have these in some quantity so that they are readily available.
- Use a standard size folder that can be easily filed. Using plastic covers, bulky clips, staples, etc. will encumber filing your material.
- Your name should always be visible on the outside of the folder, using either a label, photo, or cover letter, preferably on letterhead. Use a bright, or distinctive color so the folder stands out in the pile.
- Make sure your name and contact info are on several pieces of the press kit – folder, bios, demo/CD, quote sheets, etc. (press clips already contain your name). These may get separated from each other while the writer is reading or working with them.
- Use colored paper, paper with a border, something to distinguish your paperwork.
- Having press quotes are like having letters of recommendation: use a better established musician, a teacher, or the person who books a club you regularly fill to vouch for your skills. These can be very short. Edit judiciously.
- Make paste-ups of press clips. If you are mentioned in an article about another performer, highlight the relevant section.
- If you have several press clips, use two-sided photocopies. The less space they take up, the more likely we are to hold on to them.
- Proof read and spell check everything!

The press release and/or bio

- Press coverage tends to be geared towards a “news events” (i.e. CD release, performance, an award). So, you want to milk these for all they are worth. Create press releases for events.
- A bio is not a chronological listing of everything you have done in your life. It should serve to highlight your more recent and greatest achievements. It needs to be more detailed than the material you give to someone booking a club AND it should be interesting to read.
- It's alright (and in some cases preferable) if the press release and bio overlap in the information they present.

- Be concise in writing these components!
- Besides news event oriented coverage, why else would someone want to read about you?
What makes you unique? (Besides being an outstanding musician...)
 - A specific approach to your instrument?
 - Association with a particular musician or group?
 - With a particular institution?
 - Do you compose?
 - Are you an educator?
 - Do you do volunteer or other humanitarian work?
 - Do you have a personal story of overcoming adversity?
 - Have you won an award or other special honor?

Sending the package

- Direct information to the appropriate person at a magazine or newspaper: use the masthead for address and call the phone number to determine who should be the recipient.
- When sending by mail, make sure you, the sender, can be identified on the outside of the package.
- Check the spelling of the recipient's name.
- Allow extra time when planning for deadlines.
 - Most weeklies need to have listings information 2 weeks ahead of time.
 - Freelancers covering events for weeklies need slightly longer, 3-4 weeks.
 - Jazz magazines go to press two months before the date of the issue (i.e. the October issue of Jazz Times is finished in the beginning of August). Expect to see your materials in print three months after you send it or later.
 - Clarify deadlines by calling the publication.
 - Keep a calendar of deadlines by working backwards from the date of your event.

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Brief company/professional history:

Ane Braithwaite started Braithwaite & Katz in the mid-'80s, working with a couple of theater and music clients (most of whom were friends of hers), part-time. Then, as now, our work comes pretty much exclusively from word-of-mouth and she ended up getting so many projects that she quit her day gig. I joined the company in 1992 after graduating from Boston College, and I've been here and enjoyed it ever since. We work with all kinds of music, from way-out jazz to classical, Klezmer, hard rock, ska. You name it, we'll promote it, as long as it's GOOD. Luckily we both have pretty different tastes, and our ranges cover just about everything. We don't both have to love what we work with (although it helps), but we have to at least agree to its artistic worth. We also do theater and event promotion (like the Montreal Jazz Festival's Northeastern PR and Boston press conference, which we do every year), but it's mostly music, and mostly jazz within that sphere.

What is your primary function as a publicist?

I think that the publicist's most useful function is as a conduit between a musician or group who is putting out great music and a writer or editor who understands the music and agrees that it's important to write about. I think that, at least within the jazz world, artistic merit still holds some weight in what gets covered. Hype is only worth so much, and I've never given it much credence, honestly. If you've got a great press angle for an artist of yours, that's a different thing. But we try to be as honest with people as we can. If we don't like an artist's music, we won't promote it. Because of that, I think that writers and editors know that we work with worthy stuff that's at least good for getting a foot in the door. Believe me, some of these men and women get 40-50 CDs A WEEK, so sometimes it's a battle just to get them to listen to something for five minutes. Sad but true. But the best thing a publicist can be is honest - with their clients and the writers and editors they deal with. Most of the latter have very sensitive Bullshit Meters, and you can only mess up with them a couple times before they stop listening.

What would you consider to be a publicist's greatest attributes?

Publicists have to know both the music that they're working with (meaning: other artists in that genre, radio stations that play that kind of music, magazines and writers who write about it, clubs that groups of that kind play in, etc.), and the media that they're pitching to. And know them very well. Just knowing that *Slym* should cover the CD you're working with isn't enough. You have to know which writer or section it should go in or to, if that

Publicists: Do You Need One?
Publicists tell you if and when you need their services, what you should look for when hiring a publicist, what they can and can't do for your career and MORE!

kind of stuff they write about. The more you know, the better. And if you just read a piece by that writer about another band, let them know that you read it. Not to kiss their ass, but to let them know that you're familiar with the publication and their writing. Most publicists are totally full of crap and/or in over their heads, unfortunately, and they're honestly not doing their clients much good. If you know what you're doing and are professional and knowledgeable it stands out, believe me.

At what point in its career should a band consider hiring a publicist?

I always tell people that it's good to do your own PR for a while. First, because you probably can't afford to hire anyone initially and secondly so you know if the publicist you hire is doing what they should. We don't generally work with people who have never done their own PR, because you can't really have much of a dialogue with them about realistic goals and how you can work together. Plus, they have higher expectations than they should. People who have never done their own PR generally think that if they can fill the Middle East Upstairs that they deserve to have a feature in *Killing Time*. That's not the way it works. Coverage like that is a building process, and sometimes takes years. You have to start with the *Notes*, then go to the *Phoenix*, then the *Clode*, then start getting stuff in the *Village Voice*, *Alternative Press*, *Mogwai*, then *Spin*. There's a definite hierarchy. *Rolling Stone* isn't interested in breaking bands with their coverage. They don't need to, and I doubt their readers expect it. They want to cover people that their huge readership might have heard a buzz about, but need to be more informed about. But the *Phoenix* and *LRG* and *ink 19* (a great monthly in Florida) and *Alternative Press* are much more amenable towards writing about an artist who's just GOOD, and not HYPED. Bands should understand the game before they start enlisting outside help. It might make them more cynical about the business in general, but it'll also help them make the most of the money they're spending.

When planning to hire a publicist, what are some of the things a band should look for?

Look for someone who knows about the music you're putting out. Someone that you see in the same clubs you go to. Someone who knows most of the writers and DJs in town. Sometimes your friend or number one fan or roadie could be a much better publicist for you than some company that charges you \$2000 a month. Buy your friend a case of beer, put them on a trial basis and see if it works. You never know. But word-of-mouth

or is a couple levels above where you're at. Ask them how they did it. Maybe it's all about their label, but it could also be someone you already know. Publicity isn't some magical, mystical art - it's just getting your music to people who might (and should) like it, who will spread the word about it. How could a band benefit from using your services?

Most groups or artists hire us not because they have loads and loads of money to spare, but because they don't have time to do their own PR any more and/or they want to focus on other things, like writing more music, touring more, working on their website, etc. Our most effective work has always been with groups who have been around for a little while, gotten some press on their own, have started playing outside of town, and want to take it to the next level. We look at what they've got and figure out where we can take them. And at this point, being publicists for years, we can listen to a CD and name thirty writers off the top of our heads that will love that CD. That five minutes of work would probably take an artist dozens and dozens of phone calls, emails and faxes to figure out. It's not that we control if a band gets coverage or not, because publicity is never, ever predictable. We just better your odds. But sometimes if you're good, you can do the same thing *twice* and *again* all day long. Some of our clients are better at PR than I am - they just don't have the time to do it as much as I do, because they've got to deal with their band members, record label, distributors, etc.

Do bands usually hire a publicist on a long term basis or by the project?

It depends. We work with some clients and record labels on a retainer basis over a long period of time (six months or a year, sometimes longer) and we also do one-shot CD Release Concert PR. If that's all that a client needs or can afford. Some publicists only work on retainers, some only by the project. We try and figure out what the artist needs and go from there.

Generally speaking, how much should a band budget to enlist the services of a publicist?

It really depends. Our fees run from \$400-500 for specific projects to \$4000 per month retainers, and everything in-between. You should budget about as much for press as for radio, generally. Honestly, every artist and project are totally different. If you're making \$125 a show, then you're not going to hire a \$2000/month publicist, unless you've got a nice trust fund that daddy set up for you when you were three. Just don't think that PR is always a huge expense, because it doesn't have to be. It's more important to have someone promoting your work that really is part of your team, rather than have someone who dresses nice and has a fancy looking

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Meet Your Neighborhood Publicist: An Interview with Ann Braithwaite

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED
BY JEN ALYSANDRA KARPIN

How much do you know about what a music publicist does? (Be honest now.) Do you know what things you should do as a performing and recording artist to help yourself get more publicity? We talked to Ann Braithwaite of the Boston-based public relations firm Braithwaite and Katz, and we learned a lot, both about the music business, and about Ann's spirited style and commitment to her work: helping to promote the music.

GMJ: Many people - musicians included - don't know how very much about what a publicist does. Could you tell us a bit about your job - your "job description," as it were - and how you feel about your work?

ANN BRAITHWAITE: I love my job. I'm surrounded by great music. We're lucky enough to have worked with some of the best in the business - the Montreal Jazz Festival and record companies including Arkadia, MAMA, RAM, Accurate. These labels alone have so many master musicians - Dr. Billy Taylor, Benny Golson, David Liebman, Gerald Wilson, Joe Diorio and more. We've also promoted CDs and projects by extraordinary musicians like the Heath Brothers,

Medeski, Martin & Wood, Satoko Fujii, Natfule's Dream, Hasidic New Wave, Joe Manen, Jonas Helborg, Spanish Fly, Mili Bermejo and Dan Greenspan, and so many more incredibly talented people....

"I see myself as a kind of matchmaker between the musicians, the media and the audience."

I see myself as a kind of matchmaker between the musicians, the media and the audience. Our role is basically to spread the word about what's great and unique about the music, the band, the record label, or the event to the media and through them to the general public.... I'll give you an example. We worked on the first Medeski, Martin & Wood CD, *Notes from the Underground*. They hired us to help get reviews of the CD. Though they were then an unknown band, the writers absolutely loved their music and lots of people reviewed them. This is not all that common for a band putting out their own CDs on their own label - but their music was so striking that a buzz started to occur. Also some people knew

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An Interview with Ann Braithwaite (continued)

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John Medeski's playing from his days touring with the Either/Orchestra. MMW also decided to tour widely and that helped to spread the word, too. People went to their shows and started talking about them on the Internet, too. All of this has contributed to their success and now they're selling out huge venues... We also publicize concerts and events. Day-to-day, the job involves an incredible amount of organizing and detail work, but on the phone, so it balances out... We're lucky because we're able to choose to work only with music we love. I can't imagine doing it any other way.

GJM: What do you see as the single most important thing you do to assist musicians' careers?

AB: Help them to get attention in the media, which can lead to more CD sales or more people coming to their concerts, and also help them beef up their press kit so they can get more, and better, gigs.

GJM: You promote and publicize jazz festivals as well as individuals and bands, yes? Do you also work with record labels? What is your relationship with radio and the press?

AB: Yes, we work with labels, the Montreal International Jazz Festival, and lots of extraordinary individual musicians and bands. On a national level, when we're

promoting a CD, we mainly work with print media. There are lots of radio pro-

motion firms, like Groov Marketing in California, that work on national radio airplay. We have great relationships with lots of ships with lots of media, mainly because we try to understand their needs, give clear, informative material, and love the music we promote because we really love the music we promote.

work with and I think that comes across. Also, I used to be a journalist, and my colleague Brian Coleman, who's amazingly talented and knowledgeable, is a radio DJ and music journalist on the side.

Another colleague, Doug, is in a band, so we all bring different knowledge to the business.

GJM: How long have you had your firm, *Braithwaite & Katz* - and how did you get into this business?

AB: I started B & K just over ten years ago with my friend Jonathan Katz. I was working full-time at New England Foundation for the Arts doing PR and development work and I loved the PR and hated the fundraising. Jonathan was an intern there and getting his Master's in PR from Boston University. We started out with

"I'd say to start promoting from the center outward. Get reviews and attention in local and regional papers, then use those to help get gigs and reviews in the national press."

some theater publicity - a show called *Melting Ice Cream*. We continued to do the-ater PR until Jonathan graduated and decided to pursue the more lucrative world of advertising. Because my interest was more in music (I played classical growing up and went to see a lot of great jazz acts - Sun Ra stands out the most!), I started to work with some friends who had a band called Full Circle. They had just been signed by CBS Records. I brazenly quit my job to do PR full-time and work more closely with the artists.

GJM: What is a typical day like at work? (Is there such a thing as a "typical day")

AB: There really is no such thing as a typical day. Russ Gershon, who runs Accurate Records, calls himself the CEO and janitor. It's really true for me, too. Here's an example from the last few days: Wednesday, all day, I was emailing writers about some of our projects - pianist Satoko Fujii who has two extraordinary new CDs out, a trio album with Mark Dresser and Jim Black, *Looking Out of the Window*, and an orchestra album, *South Wind*, and trumpet CD *Song for Jyoti* is out of this world... On Thursday, I was returning phone calls, writing some press releases, having lunch with a journalist just to

"Really great music is like a life force - it gives me energy."

GJM: What can you tell jazz artists about some things they can do to help get more publicity? What mistakes do musicians commonly make in their approach to getting press or with the market-als they send out?

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catch up, making some calls to journalists and radio about an upcoming show by guitarist Joe Diorio in New York. Paying a few bills. Today, I'll be packing because we're moving our office next week, but in between, I need to write two more press releases and pick the list of media to whom they'll be sent, find someone to mail them, and respond to any questions from clients or press...

GJM: What inspires you? **AB:** What inspires me most is the music. Sometimes when I'm really burned out from working hard and I don't feel like doing anything, I'll go out and hear music and that gets me going again. Last week we went to hear the Dutch group "Clusone Trio." Amazing, outrageous and sublime. Really great music is like a life force - it gives me energy.

GJM: What can you tell jazz artists about some things they can do to help get more publicity? What mistakes do musicians commonly make in their approach to getting press or with the market-als they send out?

An Interview with Ann Braithwaite, continued

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you've been building your audience and playing for a while.

AB: Depending upon where you are as an artist in your career, I'd say to start promoting from the center outward. Get reviews and attention in local and regional papers, then use those to help get gigs and reviews in the national press. It's harder to get national attention if you haven't built a base and built a following in your region first.... Other tips for artists include: *Develop professional material.* A clear, well-written biography and press kit will help you to stand out from the pack. Not full of hype, but full of facts. Good black and white - and color - photos are also important. Make sure to have your name and contact information on the photos and in the press kit.... When you have a performance,

"The biggest obstacle is that there are so many CDs coming out that no one, not the journalists, record buyers, not the public, can keep up..."

GMJM: What do you see as the obstacles that are in the way these days that keep a talented musician or composer from achieving wider recognition? What is your biggest frustration?

AB: The biggest obstacle is that there are so many CDs coming out that no one, not the journalists, not the record buyers, not the public, can keep up. I'm calling press to ask if they've listened to a CD, and they're months behind because they get so many CDs. Some folks get fifty to seventy CDs a week! On the other hand, because it's easier to put our CDs, there's some great music that we wouldn't have heard years ago. So it's a two-way street. I certainly don't want to discourage anyone from making a CD and pursuing their art. My job is to help cut through the clutter and explain why someone might want to listen to a particular CD. It's also to know people's tastes so I don't send them, or bug them about, music they're not likely to enjoy.

GMJM: Do you think it helps or hinders being a woman in the music business? How do "gender" and "image" play a role in the world of music public relations?

AB: You know, I hear people complaining about discrimination in this business, but I've never encountered it personally. I've always just tried to do a good job and gone after what I wanted and things have worked out. Perhaps that's because I have my own company and I can call the shots.

GMJM: If someone is working with you, what can they expect - and what could they do to make your job easier?

AB: If someone is working with us, we'll review or create their press materials and help to decide who we should target in the media. One advantage of working with us, especially if you have a new CD, is that we know so many of the media nationally and can help to decide which ones would like an artist's music. We also do tour support to help artists gain media attention for gigs. What we can't do immediately is get you on the cover of a major magazine like *Rolling Stone*. We had one client who walked in and said "I want to be on the cover of *Rolling Stone*." He didn't understand that it's a building process, and that usually fame comes after

GMJM: Do you see yourself doing this work for a long time to come?

AB: I expect I'll be doing it for quite a while.

GMJM: If you ever "retire" - what would you like to be doing?

AB: My other dream is to buy an old farm in Vermont - and I'm not just saying that because you're a Vermont publication! - and start a music series. Build a beautiful space with great acoustics and bring my favorite artists to perform. Pay them well, give them a place to relax and vacation. But I'll need to get rich first, and that hasn't come from promoting jazz! I have so many interests outside of music that if only I could live lots of parallel lives, I'd be able to do everything. More travel, learn to speak Italian and French, start a magazine, start a foundation to help kids, study architecture, art, sculpture. Oh, I also would love to play music again - I used to play classical piano and clarinet. I'll learn to improvise, play the drums. I guess I'd better get going!!

GMJM: Ann, thank you so much for your time.

AB: Thanks, Jen. ♦

**Janlyn
PR**

HOW TO BEST SELF-PROMOTE

The following publicity recommendations were put together to help artists best sell themselves and their CDs every chance they get.

Interviews

- Make sure to mention your new / upcoming CD in the interview by:
 - *full name*
 - *release date/time*
 - *label*
- Ask for copy of article/tape if possible so you can listen to/view yourself.
- Consider small adjustments after listening/viewing to strengthen your self-promotion and interview skills.
- Try to have at least one new / current CD with you for an interview (signed if possible) just in case interviewer does not have his. *This is particularly important for TV!*

Performances

- Introduce yourself by full name and mention current CD title /label at the beginning and end of your indoor ticketed performance.
- Introduce yourself by full name and mention current CD title/label at the beginning / middle / and end of an outdoor, non-ticketed performance, because people join the audience at various points.
- Know where / if your CDs are being sold at the performance. If so, inform of your audience of where they can buy it. *Note for them if you will be available to sign it.*
- Inform audience at least at end of show – *this is mostly pertinent for festival/in-store performances* – if you will be performing somewhere else that day/time period.

General

- When particularly impressed with a resulting media piece, consider writing/sending a thank you note to the author/producer.
- When particularly impressed with venue and/or event, consider writing/sending a thank you note to the producer / manager / booker.
- Consider asking key music friends/contacts to keep you mind for mentions within their interviews. For instance, if a musician played on your CD and is asked by an interviewer to name "Who's Hot Today?" he can mention you. *If you make this request, please make certain they have received a copy (copies) of your CD!*
- Keep your PR person/manager/label informed of any new story opportunities about you:
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 - *special events / collaborations*
 - *personal story you want to share*

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JAZZ NOTE RECORDS

ARTIST BIO

7 1/2
NOTE.

KURT ELLING

"It's always about the context," as three-time Grammy nominee Kurt Elling succinctly puts it. Music is a distillation of the spirit, the atmosphere, and the soul of a place in sound."

The statement could not be more true for Live In Chicago, Elling's fourth and latest Blue Note album. While continuing to expand the art of vocalese, to redraw the boundaries between jazz singing and the spoken word, and to further his scat singing prowess, Elling's newest offering highlights three nights of explosive live recording in his native Chicago. The album would be the next best thing to buying a ticket to Chi-town, but the one-time, magical contributions of legendary guests - vocalist Jon Hendricks, Chicago tenors Von Freeman, Eddie Johnson, and Ed Petersen, plus hand drummer Kahil El' Zabar - make it even better. It captures a historic event. As it stands now, repeat performances are only available via your CD player.

Closely following the success of This Time It's Love (1998), Live in Chicago fills an obvious need. "From the beginning, people have wanted me to make a live album," says the 31-year-old Elling, and the reasons are obvious to those who have witnessed his talents first-hand. He has an uncanny ability to sculpt time and musical space over the course of an evening; moreover, his performances possess tremendous energy and spontaneity, attributes that have been widely acclaimed. Those results are hardly accidental: "When you plan a live set, you're dealing with what kind of intensity you want people to experience. It has to hit them with velocity, but we're also trying to build something. I want to create events, but I also want to open their hearts and brains."

The Green Mill was the obvious choice of location for such an undertaking, not only because Elling's quartet has played there regularly for the last three years, but on account of his career-long history with the venue. It was the first place in Chicago where he ever sat in and the club's regulars have been staunch supporters from the get-go. Paid tribute as Elling's "second domicile" on "Dolores Dream" (Close Your Eyes: 1995), The Mill was the site at which he made early guest appearances with Ed Petersen's band and met current quartet members, pianist Laurence Hobgood and bassist Rob Arnster.

"It's a place where the music is respected," according to Elling. "The whole place just makes you want to play better. It's got an excitement, it's got an electric charge to it on any given night." Given the unique history of the establishment, that's no wonder. In keeping with Elling's own highly individualistic work, The Mill is truly one of a kind, at once debonair and in possession of a certain Chicago grit. Opened in 1908 and run by associates of Al Capone, The Mill weathered prohibition as a speakeasy. It is still decked out in its original decor: art deco moldings, high-backed booths sporting worn bottle-green velvet upholstery, and incongruous 10 foot-long pastoral murals. Bullet holes in the walls and a second piano behind the bar stand as reminders of a bygone era when the jazz musicians' art was more literally in jeopardy.

To this setting, now add the historical presences of Jon Hendricks, Von Freeman, and Eddie Johnson. Hendricks, a pioneer of vocalese and scat master, has long been an inspiration to Elling. Likewise, Hendricks has felt a special kinship with the younger singer: "He's somebody, a real soul. He's also a very important man in my estimation, a trendsetter in jazz vocals at this time." They share the stage for two of Hendricks' famous vocalese numbers: "Don't Get Scared," and "Goin' to Chicago," a Chi-town anthem that pays tribute to a "real down city with good folks who come from home."

Elling speaks of the tenormen with equal reverence, referring to Von Freeman as "the grand old man of people who are hungry to make good sounds." Chicago's jazz patriarch, he was one of Elling's mentors and a fixture at The Mill. Eddie Johnson, former Louis Jordan band member and a guest on The Messenger and This Time It's Love, is also a Chicago legend for "his tones so buttery and warm, makes you lick your lips after each solo." Add the flame-throwing horn of Ed Petersen to this elder statesmen combo and you've got Elling's "The Rent Party," an extended spoken-word piece about late night festivities bursting with saxophone talent.

HEMISPHERE



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And "The Rent Party" is only one among many of the album's previously unrecorded gems. The album opens with "Downtown," a wordless version of a Yellowjackets tune strongly reworked in the bebop tradition; and contains a soaring vocalese version of Wayne Shorter's "Night Dreamer" retitled "Night Dream." "Oh My God," a pop hit by Sting, easily adapts in Elling's hands and features the buoyant hand drumming of guest Kahil El'Zabar. The mystical "Esperanto" touches the heart in a manner akin to "The Beauty of All Things" (The Messenger: 1997) and "My Foolish Heart," which opened This Time Is Love, is greatly expanded by a gorgeous centerpiece, an adaptation of a poem by St. John of the Cross. Both point to Elling's former graduate student days at the University of Chicago's Divinity School and his literary knack.

As for sidemen, Elling's regular team - collaborator and pianist Laurence Hobgood, bassist Rob Amster, and drummer Michael Raynor - continues to provide energetic support while making their own highly visible individual contributions. Hobgood (a.k.a. Gigantasaurus Rex on "The Rent Party") remains a powerful force, soloing persuasively on "Night Dream" and "My Foolish Heart." "He's what I would call omnipotent; his sustaining role, his orchestral role, his accompanying role, it's always much more than accompanying. It's incredible to interact with somebody who has that much of a gift." This is also the fourth album which Hobgood has co-produced with Elling.

Live in Chicago benefits from a hearty dose of Rob Amster's playing, heard more here than on previous albums. As Elling says, "I'm happy about that because he really deserves it. He's matured into a graceful and swinging, very strong-willed musician and I have a deep respect for his work ethic." Amster shines during a lyrical solo on "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes." Michael Raynor, whose rhythms drive the quartet, acts as a playful counterbalance: "Mike has an energy that's really fresh and loose. He's just so coltish in his approach, and that gives it a vibrancy you can only have if you have a youthful spirit."

In the recent past, Elling acted as the Artistic Director for Chicago's week-long Millennium Celebration. His quartet, augmented by a string quartet and horn section, performed as the house band at the grand finale, a New Year's Eve concert featuring world-renowned, Chicago-bred talent: Buddy Guy, Oscar Brown, Jr., Von Freeman, Orbert Davis, and The Soul Children, a 300-voice gospel choir. The program was part of a 24-hour global TV broadcast in celebration of the New Year.

Earlier in the Fall, Elling brought his tribute to Beat poet Allen Ginsberg to the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC and the Annenberg Center in Philadelphia. A theatrical, musical, and critical exploration of Ginsberg's life and work, the show originated from a commission by Chicago's Steppenwolf Theater, as a part of the Traffic Series curated by Kahil El'Zabar.

Like Elling's other recordings, Live in Chicago will continue to set a standard for new directions in vocal jazz performance. Elling has quickly become a significant figure in the rich and diverse history of jazz music. Of this most recent project he proudly states, "I'm really thrilled with how it came out. You asked, was the spirit there? Well, Jon Hendricks was there. Von was there. How could the spirit not have come? And how could it not be an extraordinary gathering? We really captured something."

Kurt Elling Live in Chicago (Blue Note 22211) January 11, 2000

For media information contact Brad Riesau or Don Luccoff at DL Media 610-667-0501 or via
E-mail: dimedia@earthlink.net

DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER

BIOGRAPHY

After four years of touring with *Dear Ella*, her wildly popular Grammy Award winning tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater has set her sights on new challenges. *This is New!* finds her plunging headfirst into a different songbook— that of trailblazing German theater composer Kurt Weill. His songs not only represent the highest level of musical craftsmanship, but they are perfectly suited to Bridgewater's intensity of expression and keen wit. She is the first vocalist in jazz history to build an entire album from them.

The idea percolated for almost two years before Bridgewater entered the studio. Some of Weill's songs were already comfortably familiar; "Mack the Knife," a perennial favorite, was part of Bridgewater's Ella repertory. "My Ship," among a handful of Weill's time-honored ballads, also came to her attention via that great lady of song. Still, Bridgewater did not fully grasp the breadth of his work. An invitation to perform at a lavish centennial celebration for the composer in Wroclaw, Poland helped to open her eyes.

"I was struck by the melodies of these different songs," she remembers. "Even though I couldn't understand the language they were singing in, I could still feel the emotion, the power. The music was very dramatic and I fell in love with it." When the Montreal Jazz Festival 2000 asked her to prepare something special, the choice was obvious. Her performance there was a hit and a recording project developed as a result.

Bridgewater was equally enchanted with the unique musical settings at the centennial, which ran the gamut from pop and rock to cabaret and jazz. Weill's songs may come from musical theater productions, but their versatility has long been proven. They have been performed by such diverse talents as Jessye Norman, Willie Nelson, Ute Lemper, and the Doors (whose version of "Alabama Song" topped charts in the late 1960s). The composer comfortably occupies the crossroads between several musical genres, a position that sparked criticism during his lifetime.

Educated in Berlin, Weill (1900-50) studied classically and was already well established when his first opera premiered in 1926. His concern for audience tastes and the desire to create "freer, lighter, and simpler" works, however, took him on a radically different course than most of his peers. He devoted himself to musical theater, beginning an association with playwright Bertolt Brecht. His memorable tunes and the influence of popular music on works like *The Threepenny Opera* shocked the avant-garde; the charge that Weill had "sold out" dogged him throughout his career. Fleeing Nazi Germany, he emigrated to the United States in 1935. His successes on Broadway – including *One Touch of Venus* and *Lost in the Stars* – owe a debt to the superb American lyricists, poets, and playwrights with whom he collaborated: Ira Gershwin, Ogden Nash, Langston Hughes, Alan Jay Lerner, and Maxwell Anderson.

Like Weill, Bridgewater's career has bridged musical genres. She earned her first professional experience as a member of the legendary Thad Jones/Mel Louis Big Band. Throughout the 70s, she performed with such jazz notables as Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon, and Dizzy Gillespie. After a foray into the pop world during the 1980s, she relocated to Paris and began to turn her attention back to jazz. She signed with the Verve label as both a performer and a producer. She would release a series of acclaimed titles beginning with *Keeping Tradition* in 1993. All of them – including her last album, *Live at Yoshi's!* – have received Grammy nominations. She currently lives in the U.S. and hosts NPR's *JazzSet*, now in its second decade on the air.

Interestingly, Bridgewater has also pursued a parallel career in musical theater. She won a Tony Award for her role as Glinda in *The Wiz* in 1975. Her other credits include *Sophisticated Ladies*, *Black Ballad*, *Carmen Jones*, and *Lady Day*, a Billie Holiday tribute for which Bridgewater received a Laurence Olivier Nomination for Best Actress in a Musical. She became the first African American actress to play the role of Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*, a production staged at the Mogador Theatre in Paris.

Bridgewater's Weill songbook would do him proud; the songs are both artfully performed and destined to have a wide appeal. She approaches the spare string arrangement of "My Ship" with classic elegance and "Speak Low" with appropriate softness. By contrast, "The Saga of Jenny" achieves a bluesy swing, "Stranger Here Myself" boasts a hard-bop groove, and "September Song" gets outright funky, topped by young lion Antonio Hart's burning saxophone solo. Other songs take more exotic twists. The inviting "Youkali," with its French text and subtle accompaniment by master bandoneonist Juan José Mosalini, evokes the imagined paradise where all one's desires come true. "Bilbao," a nostalgic, extended travelogue, opens with a stunning flamenco interlude by Louis Winsberg, whom Bridgewater describes as "the Pat Metheny of France."

The electric samba of the title song and contemplative "Lost in the Stars" were arranged by Thierry Eliez, Bridewater's pianist for the last 12 years. The rest, however, were crafted by Cecil Bridgewater, a renowned trumpeter and Dee Dee's first husband. Dee Dee herself has taken an active role in the evolution of these charts through performance. "I wanted a nonet formation," she says, "because I knew that I could change it up, give it different sounds and colors, and therefore treat each song like a little vignette." She produced the album, as well as her four other Verve releases.

As for her future plans with the material, Bridgewater envisions a true hybrid between jazz and musical theater. "I'm finding personalities for each of the songs and it's starting to turn into a show," she reveals. "These songs are fabulous to act out. They're just so much fun."



VERVE RECORDING ARTIST SAXOPHONIST CHRIS POTTER ON TOUR IN SUPPORT OF TRAVELING MERCIES

Dates set for BLUES ALLEY in Washington, D.C.-September 17 & 18, ZANZIBAR BLUE in Philadelphia, PA-September 20 & 21, JAZZ BAKERY in Los Angeles, CA-September 24-29, and THE OUTPOST in Albuquerque, NM-September 30

Verve recording artist **Chris Potter** hits the road in support of *Traveling Mercies*, the saxophonist's second recording for Verve Records, and the follow up to *Gratitude* (released April 3, 2001). The tour kicks off on the CD's street date, Tuesday, September 17th, 2002, with two nights at Blues Alley in Washington, D.C. From there Potter and his quartet featuring Kevin Hays on piano and Fender Rhodes, Scott Colley on bass and Bill Stewart on drums will be heading to Philadelphia for two nights, September 20 & 21, at the city's premier jazz venue, Zanzibar Blue. The tour continues with a week at The Jazz Bakery in Los Angeles, September 24-29, and a one-night-only performance at The Outpost Performance Space in Albuquerque on September 30 (see below for tour date details).

On this recording the saxophonist reflects upon encounters and experiences from recent tours as a bandleader and as a sideman with such artists as Dave Holland, Dave Douglas and Steely Dan. From the opening track, as Potter's tenor saxophone rises over a bed of electric keyboards and sampled sounds, *Traveling Mercies* marks a departure from his previous recordings. "The idea that I had thematically was to explore different ideas about American history and how they affect people living now, so the whole point is to understand the present," Potter says. "And in the present, there's electronica, there's music from all over the world influencing everybody, and there are all sorts of different sounds that people are exploring."

Traveling Mercies opens with "Megalopolis," a memorable theme laid out over an odd time danceable vamp, which evokes a big American city and its inherent hustling, bustling vibe. The poignant "Invisible Man" takes its title from Ralph Ellison's classic novel about racism in America, and is Potter's musical reflection on society's judgmental nature. "Snake Oil" was inspired by Potter's thoughts of "the smokescreens that end up being used in order to sell people things." Chris and the quartet also offer their take on Willie Nelson's spiritual "Just As I Am" and the traditional hymn "Children Go." The album touches on many themes and topics, but carries an overall message from Chris - "I would like to dedicate this recording to the hope that, knowing where we've come from and where we want to go, we will make our decisions as a society out of respect and compassion for one another and the world we live in."

Potter is joined on his musical journey by bandmates with whom he has shared many of his experiences on the road: pianist Kevin Hays, bassist Scott Colley and drummer Bill Stewart. Two guitarists make special guest appearances, labelmate John Scofield and Adam Rogers.

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CHRIS POTTER QUARTET ON TOUR

With Kevin Hays on piano and Fender Rhodes, Scott Colley on bass and Bill Stewart on drums

September 17 & 18

Blues Alley

Washington, D.C.

Showtimes are 8:00 & 10:00 PM, for reservations/tickets call 202 337 4148

or click on www.bluesalley.com

September 20 & 21

Zanzibar Blue

Philadelphia, PA

Showtimes are 9:00 & 11:00 PM, for reservations/tickets call 215 732 4500

or click on www.Zanzibarblue.com

September 24-29

The Jazz Bakery

Los Angeles, CA

Showtimes are 8:00 & 9:30 PM, for reservations/tickets call 310 271 9039

or click on www.jazzbakery.org

September 30

The Outpost Performance Space

Albuquerque, NM

Showtime is 7:30 PM. For tickets call 505 268 0044

or click on www.outpostspace.org

For more information or to schedule an interview with Chris Potter contact Helene Greece or Jason Byrne at Third Floor/East West Media, tel 212 924 3916, fax 212 924 5751, e-mail Helene@eastwestmedia.net, Jason@eastwestmedia.net

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THE VERVE MUSIC GROUP

Chris Potter
Traveling Mercies

Among the many experiences that can shape a musician's work, spending time on the road can be one of the most enlightening. Touring brings with it the opportunity to encounter new places and people, and to examine the wide variety of experiences that combine to make up American life. On *Traveling Mercies*, Chris Potter's second disc for Verve Records, the saxophonist reflects upon some of the things he encountered on recent tours, and examines the ways in which history has shaped the country socially, spiritually and musically.

As a native of Columbia, South Carolina who had moved up to New York City at age 18 to study at the Manhattan School of Music, Potter had already witnessed very different American lifestyles firsthand. Recent touring as a bandleader and as a sideman with such artists as Dave Holland, Dave Douglas and Steely Dan, however, took Potter to places he'd never been. As he began to prepare the music for his second Verve release, the follow-up to his critically acclaimed debut *Gratitude*, Potter began to reflect upon the implications of things he had seen on the road.

"People think of America as being one unified place," Potter says. "But the thing that's unified is that every place has a K-Mart and a Home Depot and a McDonalds. The fact that we're all watching the same shows on TV is a homogenizing influence, too. But beyond that, there are actually a lot of different strains of culture that run through this country that make it a fascinating place."

The events of last September 11 cast those reflections in a new light. "It seemed like such an intense, flag-waving time that it made me reflect more upon the history of the United States—the good parts and the bad," Potter says. "Most of the tunes grew out of that."

Potter recorded *Traveling Mercies* in New York in January 2002, producing the session with Verve A&R Manager Jason Oline. He found the title of his disc in a sermon he'd heard at a gospel church in the Bronx. "It summed up the mood of the record, which has to do with people moving around," Potter explains. "It's sort of an all-American experience: People come here from somewhere else, and then move around when they get here."

From the very beginning, as Potter's tenor saxophone rises over a bed of electric keyboards and sampled sounds, the sound of *Traveling Mercies* marks a departure from previous recordings. "The idea that I had thematically was to explore different ideas about American history and how they affect people living now, so the whole point is to understand the present," Potter says. "And in the present, there's electronica, there's music from all over the world influencing everybody, and there are all sorts of different sounds that people are exploring. It only made sense to incorporate that."

Naturally, Potter took a hands-on approach to incorporating these new sounds. In addition to his usual arsenal of saxophones, flute and bass clarinet, he bought a sampler and taught himself how to use it. Potter mentions Miles Davis's electric period, Herbie Hancock's Headhunters and the



recordings of Stevie Wonder as influences, which called for electric keyboards such as Fender Rhodes and clavinet. "I was also checking out other kinds of music, listening to drum & bass records, pop and rap, and the way those records are produced," he says. "There was something I heard in that that I wanted to incorporate into what I was doing."

Traveling Mercies opens with "Megalopolis," a towering, teeming urban soundscape. "I was thinking about the growth of the big cities in the U.S., especially in the Northeast, where I live now," Potter explains, "and the way the neighborhoods formed in the cities: immigrants arriving from abroad at Ellis Island, and African-Americans moving north after the war."

"Snake Oil" was inspired by the old-time medicine shows that would roll into American towns to sell miracle cures. "The smokescreens that end up being used in order to sell people things was a thought behind that," Potter says. He found modern echoes in the idea, as well: "If you look at Enron, it's more snake oil."

Potter reflected upon his own roots for "Washed Ashore": "The most immediate thing I related to is my mom's family arriving from the Jewish ghettos in Russia and Poland around the turn of the century. But that's only one wave; wave after wave of people washed ashore in this country, and obviously slaves from Africa, too—against their will, but in the same boat, so to speak, of being in a new land."

Potter heard a gospel choir perform the traditional spiritual "Children Go" at New York's Town Hall. "The roots of jazz and R'n'B developed from the idea of the Protestant hymn translated into the African-American experience," Potter explains. "That has a very distinctive, earthy flavor that's very American."

Two mass movements in the late 19th and early 20th centuries inspired "Migrations": the journey of the migrant workers in the 1930s leaving ruined Dust Bowl farms and heading west, and the African-American migration north to the big cities after the Civil War. On "Azalea," Potter evokes a sense of nostalgia for his own childhood in the south.

"Highway One" charts the course of two American highways, one a scenic route along the California coastline, the other an old highway on the East Coast along which cities grew before they were bypassed by a modern interstate highway. "A lot of those towns are not doing so well now," Potter notes. "They're sort of frozen in time. I was also thinking about the huge impact of the automobile on American culture—the whole idea of going from here to there, and how the American scale of distance is so huge."

Traveling Mercies closes with Willie Nelson's "Just As I Am," which, like "Children Go," reflects the influence of church hymns on American music.

Potter is joined on his picturesque journey by band mates with whom he has shared many of his experiences on the road: pianist Kevin Hays, bassist Scott Colley and drummer Bill Stewart.

"Kevin approaches things from an orchestral standpoint," Potter says. "He's going for a specific kind of sound for the entire band and the music. With Scott, we've done so many gigs together that I just feel I can go in any direction at any time and he'll be there. And Bill has such a great sound and range of attack and inflection. You never feel that it's unclear or that he's going to go somewhere halfway—he really hears whatever he's going to do, and then executes it flawlessly."

A longtime fan of the guitar, Potter invited two of his favorite players to join the band on *Traveling Mercies*: labelmate John Scofield and close friend Adam Rogers. "There's something about Scofield's playing that I can relate to," Potter says. "I really hear that blues thing in there. I can tell he loves that music and that he loves Lester Young, also." Of Rogers, Potter says, "I feel like he's really trying to extend the harmonic language possible on the guitar. I called him to play the steel-string acoustic guitar, but it was his idea to use the slide on 'Azalea,' and it totally fit the mood."

Potter looks forward to hitting the road with the music from *Traveling Mercies*, though most likely he'll have to leave the guitars. His compositions, however, are certainly strong enough to withstand being pared down, and the message will remain just as clear. In a brief note penned for the disc, Potter summarizes that message: "I would like to dedicate this recording to the hope that, knowing where we've come from and where we want to go, we will make our decisions as a society out of respect and compassion for one another and the world we live in."

Traveling Mercies [440 018 243-2] available on CD September 17th, 2002.

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Chris Potter

Traveling Mercies

Verve Music Group

Release Date: September 17, 2000

1. Megalopolis 6:59
2. Snake Oil 6:04
3. Invisible Man 5:07
4. Washed Ashore 7:04
5. Children Go 5:36
Traditional Spiritual
6. Any Moment Now 5:20
7. Migrations 8:05
8. Azalea 5:48
9. Highway One 10:10
10. Just As I Am 3:35
Willie Nelson

All compositions by Chris Potter except where noted

Traveling Mercies – Personnel

Chris Potter: Soprano Saxophone (6,9), Tenor Saxophone (1-5, 7,8), Alto Flute (2,3,6)
Bass Clarinet (2,6,10), **Reed Organ** (6), **Clarinete** (1), **Sampler** (1,2,6,7), **Percussion** (2), **Vocal** (3)
Kevin Hays: Piano (1-3,5-7,9 & 10), **Fender Rhodes** (1,4,8), **Clarinete** (7)
Scott Colley: Bass (1-9)
Bill Stewart: Drums (1-9)
John Scofield: Guitar (1,4,7)
Adam Rogers: Acoustic Guitar (3), Slide Guitar (8)

Traveling Mercies was produced by **Chris Potter & Jason Olaine**
Executive Producers: **Daniel Richard, Louise Holland & Anna M. Sala**

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**GIDON KREMER AND KREMERATA BALTICA RELEASE
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RELEASE FOLLOWS ON HEELS OF GRAMMY-WINNING "AFTER MOZART"

The distinguished violinist Gidon Kremer leads members of his young chamber ensemble Kremerata Baltica in performances of the *Octet for Strings*, Op. 7, and *Quintet for Piano and Strings*, Op. 29, by Romanian composer Georges Enescu. This recording, their fifth release for the label, is set for release on May 21, 2002, and follows a recent Grammy Award for their 2001 release "After Mozart." Kremer and Kremerata Baltica will perform at Carnegie Hall on May 1 and 2, 2002.

The two works featured on this recording—one from very early in the composer's career, the other a mature creation—offer profound evidence of Enescu's technical assurance and distinctive voice. Born in 1881 in Iiveni, Romania, Enescu was a child prodigy who entered the Vienna Conservatory as a violinist at the age of seven. Graduating at age 10, he performed the music of Brahms under the composer's direction and witnessed performances of Wagner's music led by legendary conductor Hans Richter. Both composers would remain influential, lifelong passions. Enescu continued his studies under Massenet and Fauré at the Paris Conservatory, where his classmates included composer Maurice Ravel, pianist Alfred Cortot and violinist Jacques Thibaud. The first concert of his compositions took place in Paris in 1897.

Active as a composer throughout his life (though he only published 33 works), Enescu was best known in the United States as a virtuoso violin soloist, chamber musician and conductor (who was once considered as a successor to Toscanini in New York). He was also a leading pedagogue, counting Yehudi Menuhin and Dinu Lipatti among his most prominent pupils. Aside from his two popular Romanian Rhapsodies, however, Enescu's compositions have suffered from neglect over the years since his death.

Written in 1900, Enescu's *Octet for Strings* combines the chromatic richness prevalent in Vienna at the time with a refined sense of formal structure. After World War I, he was increasingly influenced by the folk music of his native Romania, the effect of which is subtly echoed in the *Quintet for Piano and Strings* of 1940, heard here in its first recording. In the hands of Kremer and his ensemble, both works are revealed to be masterful and distinctive pieces that deserve to be more widely known.

Kremerata Baltica, who the *Los Angeles Times* calls, "...extraordinary young players...they animate everything their bows touch..." was founded by Gidon Kremer in 1996. An orchestra of young musicians from the three Baltic States, they first performed in Riga, Latvia in February 1997 and have gone on to tour throughout the world. Kremer had long sought to share his rich artistic experience with young musicians in his native Latvia and the Baltic region, and was prompted to form a more lasting relationship with the artists, as a way to give back to the community that fostered his own musical growth. Kremer, who acts as the group's artistic director, said, in an interview for *The New York Times*, that it functions as "a musical democracy...open-minded, self-critical, a continuation of my musical spirit."

Kremerata Baltica recently signed an exclusive, six-record agreement with Nonesuch Records, inaugurated in 2000 with the release of *Eight Seasons*, a re-orchestration of Piazzolla's *Cuatro estaciones porteñas* paired with the Vivaldi classic. *Silencio*, released later that year, is a meditative collection of 20th century works for string orchestra, including works by Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass and Vladimir Martynov.

ALBUM RELEASE DATE: May 21, 2002.

Visit www.nonesuch.com for complete tour dates and additional information, or contact:

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GIDON KREMER

Biography

Over the course of nearly thirty years of a distinguished career, violinist Gidon Kremer, born in Riga in 1947, has established a worldwide reputation as one of the most original and compelling artists of his generation, praised for his high degree of individualism, his rejection of the well-trodden paths of interpretation, and his search for new possibilities.

Gidon Kremer has made more than one hundred recordings for a number of record labels. His latest Nonesuch release, *Tracing Astor*, marks the third in a trilogy of albums celebrating the music of Astor Piazzolla. His Nonesuch discography also includes the Grammy-nominated *Hommage à Piazzolla* (1996), *El Tango* (1997), which feature arrangements of the works of Astor Piazzolla performed by Kremer's acclaimed Astor Quartet, and *Eight Seasons* (2000), which pairs Vivaldi's masterpiece *The Four Seasons* with the Astor Piazzolla work of the same name, in a performance featuring the Kremerata Baltica, an ensemble he founded.

Kremer's recordings, which have earned him a series of major international awards, have set new standards of interpretation. His repertoire is unusually extensive, encompassing all of the standard classical and Romantic violin works, as well as music by twentieth century masters. He has also championed the works of living Russian and Eastern European composers and has performed many important new compositions, of which several are dedicated to him. It is owing to his never-ending activities that we are able to appreciate composers such as Alfred Schnittke, Arvo Pärt, Sofia Gubaidulina, Valentin Silvestrov, Luigi Nono, Arbert Reimann, John Adams and Astor Piazzolla, while being able to experience classical music in a new way, one that bears tradition and at the same time remains contemporary.

Deeply committed to chamber music, his music festival in the small Austrian village of Lockenhaus, founded in 1981, is the realization of his belief that music can overcome all barriers of language and culture. Since 1992 the Lockenhaus musicians have been performing all over the world under the Kremerata Musica logo. On the occasion of Franz Schubert's 200th birthday celebrations in 1997, they undertook a comprehensive concert cycle throughout Europe, including appearances at the Salzburg Festival.

In November 1996 Gidon Kremer founded the Kremerata Baltica, a chamber orchestra to foster outstanding young musicians from the three Baltic States. The Kremerata Baltica, which began undertaking regular concert tours with Kremer in 1997, has signed an exclusive, six-record deal with Nonesuch Records, of which *Eight Seasons* (2000) was the inaugural release, followed by *Silencio* (2000) and *After Mozart* (2001). In 1997 Gidon Kremer also took over leadership of the Musiksommer Gstaad (Switzerland), in succession to Lord Yehudi Menuhin.

Kremer began studying the violin at the age of four with his father and grandfather, and in 1965 he became a student of David Oistrach's master class at the Moscow Conservatory. He has since been awarded the most prestigious violinist prizes, including the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, and the Paganini Competition in Genoa, among others. He has also received many music awards such as the Frankfurt Music Award, the Ernst von Siemens Music Award, the first prize at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana and the Federal Service Cross of Germany. Kremer has appeared on virtually every major concert stage with the most celebrated orchestras of Europe and America, and has recorded with today's foremost conductors including Leonard Bernstein, Christoph Eschenbach, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Herbert von Karajan and Riccardo Muti.

Gidon Kremer plays a Guarneri del Gesù - ex David - dating from 1730.

Updated 2001

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KREMERATA BALTICA *Biography*

KREMERATA BALTICA, an orchestra of young musicians from the three Baltic States, was created in November 1996 by Gidon Kremer, the ensemble's artistic leader and soloist. Kremer's work with these musicians, whose average age is 24, was originally intended as a one-time collaboration as part of a 50th birthday celebration held at the Lockenhaus Festival. The experience at Lockenhaus, a summer music festival which Kremer has run for 18 years, prompted him to form the group. "...Once I actually got in touch with these people, once I started to work with them, it became evident to me that it's much more than a summer project," says Kremer. "I would say that they gave me the hope that we can have a future together...it's a project which has no limitations and is open for all open-minded spirits."

Kremer's desire to share his rich artistic experience with young musicians from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania has helped draw much-needed attention to the need for support and encouragement of the independent musical life of the three Baltic States, at a time of great economic hardship.

The group performed its debut concert on Maestro Kremer's 50th birthday on February 27, 1997 in his native city of Riga, in Latvia, followed by four highly successful international tours. Under Maestro Kremer's baton, the Kremerata Baltica gave concerts at the Ludwigsburg, Gstaad and Lockenhaus Festivals. They also performed the world premiere of Peterts Vasks' *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* at the Salzburg Summer Festival.

In addition to maintaining a rigorous touring schedule, which has taken the group to festivals and concert halls throughout Europe, Asia and the United States, the Kremerata Baltica recently signed an exclusive, six-album recording agreement with Nonesuch Records. This agreement commenced with the release of *Eight Seasons* in early 2000, a project that pairs Argentinean composer Astor Piazzolla's *Four Seasons* with that of the Vivaldi work of the same name. A second release, entitled *Silencio* and featuring works by Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass and Vladimir Martynov, was released later that year. Their current release, *After Mozart* (2001), brings together the music of W.A. Mozart (and that of his father, Leopold), with three contemporary works inspired by him.

Much in demand at venues throughout the world, Kremerata Baltica will tour the US again next spring, appearing at Carnegie Hall in New York City and Symphony Hall in Chicago, among others.

Updated 9/1/01

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DAVE DOUGLAS WITNESS

Let's talk a bit about the genesis and evolution of the new album.

The genesis of the music was a performance at Roulette three years ago, called "Thoughts Around Mahfouz." There was a ton of material for "Mahfouz," and I felt that I was asking everyone in the quarter to do too many things. I was trying to do three things at a time, and I was asking them to do that as well. I guess I was hearing something bigger. In 1999, I received an invitation from the Donaueschinger Musiktag, an important new music festival, and I wanted it to be a mix of contemporary musics, bringing together all of the strands of music I've been involved in. I had these bits of "Mahfouz," and I had started to think about what my motivation had been for that music, when there was an incident on the train, which I described in the program for a performance last summer:

"This whole thing began on an Italian train near the Yugoslav border when I read a fairly boring newspaper article on the rising stock of American weapons makers during the NATO war on Yugoslavia. Not far away, half a million people were camped in a muddy field without much hope of escaping -- or of going home. As usual, some people were making a huge profit. The idea made me angrier with each day of that "war." I felt so lucky and so privileged not to be out there in the muddy field; to be making music every night for an attentive audience. But the shock of what was going on made it hard to separate what we were doing from the horrible and persistent abuse of money and power that is at the root of these situations.

"It was a cause for reflection and possibly pessimism. But a closer look gives cause for great hope and optimism. There are undaunted people objecting all around the world. Arts and the imagination provide one of the few creative ways of NOT belonging to the madness. This music was written in celebration of that positive protest. Each piece is inspired by and dedicated to artists and activists who have creatively challenged authority, sometimes endangering their own lives, but inspiring the rest of us to resist."

I took some of these "Mahfouz" fragments and a handful of new compositions with me to Donaueschingen, and rehearsed them with a nine-piece group. It was a really wonderful experience.

How do you think people are going to react to your first overtly political statement?

So many artists have been involved in political work, and my take on it is a lot more abstract. Most of the artists involved in this kind of thing are pop artists who use lyrics to get across what they're talking about, and I don't want to do that. This is the fine line that I'm walking on: I'm involved in this abstract music that doesn't necessarily belong at a political rally, so I've found that the only way to make my statement is to release it this way. I feel that the reason I've made so many CDs over the years is that I have a real affinity for the form, the 55- to 75-minute musical statement that fits together in a certain sequence, a certain instrumentation, certain set of players and a certain philosophy and concept. I feel that it's a lot like writing a book. *Witness* is a collection of stories, whereas *Sanctuary* would be like a stream-of-consciousness novel. *Soul on Soul* and *A Thousand Evenings* I would also see as larger stories. And in a sense, a collection

of short stories can be like a full novel, in the way they all fit together. The larger context of *Witness* is that all the "stories" have a political, activist subtext within the music.

A number of jazz artists in the 1960s created political statements in jazz, including Charles Mingus, Max Roach and Archie Shepp. But after a while, it seemed as if they all backed away from that stance to varying degrees.

A lot of them got marginalized just because it was political music. It stopped being heard as music. A lot of other crazy things happened at that time. It was all so new – it was probably hard for them to know how far to go, and how to be involved and still be a musician, be an artist. But they lost a lot – they all were marginalized at one time or another because of their viewpoints, and that must be very frustrating. Coltrane was somebody who had a political impact, even though that's probably not something he spent a lot of time thinking about. What he did by bringing in the younger players under his wing was very political, as was the viewpoint of his music – the searching, the idea that "Okay, now I'm a success, I'm not going to just keep doing the same thing, I'm going to change every six months." Coltrane is the perfect example that without jumping up and down and being sycophantic about it, you can also have an ideal that creating music in itself – the very philosophy of why we're doing it – is political.

How so?

Music that's between improvisation and composition, that doesn't take anything for granted, and that isn't steered along one dogmatic concept encourages its audience to also wake up and think about what they're doing and what they're listening to and why it is what it is, and who are we, why are we here, where are we going? All great art forces you to ask those questions, which are very important because they confront on a personal level. Even though this is a more specifically political record, it doesn't step so far out from what I do. Everything that I do, on a certain level, has a social point of view and proposes a new way that the music and society can be.

Does writing for this band construe a sort of microcosm of what an ideal society could be, then?

I try to make good music and have a good time. I think that everyone should be challenged but also have fun, and have enough freedom to be themselves without infringing on anybody else's freedom. So I guess the answer is "yes," but I think that goes for all my music, and the music that I like.

Does the music on *Witness* specifically follow from the work or example of the people who inspired it?

Each piece relates in some way to its dedicatee. The very audaciousness of "Ruckus" was inspired by things that I was reading regarding the Ruckus Society. The absurdity in "Kidnapping Kissenger" was based on Ebal Ahmad's story itself, and also the sense of humor that he had to deal with his situation in the way that he did. He actually told a judge, "You should let me out, because I need to be out in the streets protesting." With "Child of All Nations," I'd read Toer's [cycle of novels] "Burni Quartet," and the progression of the piece is related to the whole quartet. "Sozaboy" is clearly an elegy for Ken Saro-Wiwa.

Given that “One More News” was the name of a Chandralekha dance about “tragedy fatigue,” it’s a surprise to hear such upbeat music.

Well, her response is very engaged and electric. Her reaction is, “Let’s go out and do something,” and she brings a lot of joy to the situation. Since she was going against caste, against gender, and against preconceptions about Indian classical dance and creativity, it was very risky.

“Mahfouz” is more about the atmosphere of his works, and in some cases specific stories. Every time we play it, someone will say, “I love Mahfouz and I know that third section was from page 15 of *The Thief and the Dogs*. I know exactly what you meant.” They are rarely right in a literal way, but the piece is about inducing those vibrations, so I think it’s wonderful that it can be heard that way. You don’t even have to have read his work to get that understanding. When we listen to music, we close our eyes and imagine things, and it’s not always what the composer specifically had in mind. That’s absolutely fine and proper.

On the record, “Mahfouz” has a vocal part that’s never been performed live. Is that new, or had you always planned to do that?

I’ve always wanted it, right from the beginning.

Are the texts in “Mahfouz” all taken from his writing?

The very first one is from a book called *Bergsonism* by Gilles Deleuze. I included that because Bergson is probably the philosopher that most influenced Mahfouz. Everything else is directly from Mahfouz.

How did Tom Waits come to be involved in the project?

I was talking to [Charms of the Night Sky bassist] Greg Cohen on an airplane, and I had this long list of potential readers for the piece. And he said, “You know who would be perfect is Tom.” I went back and listened to a bunch of my old Tom Waits records – *Mule Variations* was one of my favorites from last year. It seemed like a perfect fit, so I just decided to go for it. Greg was going out over the holidays to visit Tom, so I sent along a rough mix of the recording. Tom heard it and agreed to do it. I sent out the Mahfouz texts, and they sat up in the kitchen one night and made this tape. I listened to the first ten seconds of the mindisk and tears were pouring out of my eyes. It was just perfect – Tom seemed to know exactly what I was looking for. It was exciting for me, as it was the first time I’d written with the voice in mind. Tom had such a deep insight into the words.

How would you describe the music of *Witness*, apart from its political content?

I think it is unique. There are elements of Arabic music in some pieces. There are improvisation and mainstream jazz sounds. There are elements of contemporary classical, in the use of woodwinds and strings in the music. When I made *Parallel Worlds*, that was really an unprecedented thing to do, and I’m still with the same core of players. But that sound is much more integrated into something else now. The use of the human voice, for me, was kind of a difficult thing to get into. But it’s very much used as a musical instrument; it’s not about following the text and ignoring the music. And there are elements of electronic music that I’m integrating in a new way here. I worked very closely with [sampler player] Yuka Honda on “Ruckus.” It’s a live performance with a lot of improvisation, which we then took into ProTools and edited. We were able to go back and take the chance elements of how the samples were used

and move them around, to really perfect how it should be. Also, Ikue Mori is one of a handful of electronic players who has truly developed a radically new and personal sound. She really shines on this record.

Ultimately, who is the audience for this record?

Music lovers. I always try to imagine an audience that can drop their preconceived notions and close their eyes and get into it. And I assume a certain education; I feel that an audience for serious music has to have a little bit of knowledge and to have done a little bit of work finding out what goes into making this music. To understand this record, you might want to be familiar a little bit with Cage, Berio, Lutoslawski, Stockhausen, and Ligeti, as well as John Coltrane, Julius Hemphill, Henry Threadgill, and Anthony Braxton, as well as with Oum Koultoum and Mohamed Abdel Wahab and Balinese gamelan music and other things.

But of course, that's not necessary to enjoy it. Ultimately, the music cuts through all of that to communicate on a very intimate, personal level. When I play a show, I assume a lot of intelligence from the audience, and I don't talk down to them. I feel the music has to communicate directly. I really feel that's the best way for me, and that people do get it.

I think what Edward Said says about the intellectual in society affected me a lot – that when you have the freedom to sit around and think, to dream up new projects and conceive of new ways of doing things, there's also a responsibility that comes with that. Within my own milieu, it gave me the sense that there is a larger responsibility in what I do.

Are you hoping that your listeners will follow your leads and look into what it is that you're talking about?

Absolutely. I would like it to be heard first as music, but I would also like to have the feeling that there are some listeners out there who may get curious about what it's about. When I talk about Chandralekha or Arundhati Roy, I get blank stares. I'm not going to presume to say that because you've never read Pramoeद्या Ananta Toer, you are somehow politically suspect. It's more like, if you dig the music and you read this, you may get something out of it. I think that's why musicians like to bare their inspirations and dedicate pieces – it gives a sense of why we do what we do. For me to dedicate a whole record to Booker Little is to say, "If you're into what I do and you don't know about Booker Little, then you should go back and check him out." I want people to hear my music, and I want to get something across, but if I can also draw attention to these other things, that's all right for everybody.

Release date: August 21st.



RCA
VICTOR
GROUP

Chiara Civello
Las Quarter Moon

Debut albums are greeted with the hope that they will offer a first glimpse of great musical talent. *Last Quarter Moon*, the recording debut of Italian singer, songwriter, and pianist Chiara Civello, makes good on the promise of discovery. This collection's enchanting originals should establish her in the firmament of today's songwriting talent; the brooding ballad "Trouble" was co-written with legend Burt Bacharach. Pop veteran Russ Titelman – known for his associations with Paul Simon, Rickie Lee Jones, and James Taylor – produced the album.

It's certainly an auspicious beginning for Civello, yet the 28 year-old is quick to point out that it is also the culmination of her young life's work. "Is this a first album? A first attempt?" she questions. "Yes, it's the first step into this world, but it's the first step from a person who has already come from a long way."

The distance she has traveled is both musical and spiritual—literally stretching across the Atlantic Ocean. Born June 15, 1975 in Rome, Civello was encouraged to play the piano by her grandmother; she kids that her *nonna's* out-of-tune upright afforded the best ear training. She briefly tried the acoustic guitar, but that ended almost comically with a drive to get some gelato. "The little car only had two doors," she remembers. "When I sat down, I broke the neck of the guitar. That was it for me. No more guitar. My mother said, 'You'd better sing, girl!'"

Civello had already been in some classical choirs, but was looking for something freer than the operatic traditions of her homeland. A friend suggested that she learn jazz; she'd never heard of it. A little investigation brought her to a private music school that she would attend through her four years of high school: the St. Louis Music Academy in Rome. When she was sixteen, Civello began singing professionally and won a scholarship to the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston. She enrolled there from 1994-98.

Well-known jazz educators directed Civello's studies: trombonist Harold Crook, tenor players Ed Tomassi and Jerry Bergonzi. "I had a very instrumental approach to singing," she remembers. "I studied bebop and transcribed solos like crazy—Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, even avant-garde jazz." By graduation, Civello was a regular on the Boston scene, where she and her band played the Regattabar, Scullers, and Ryles.

But her journey didn't end with Boston or jazz. Like generations of Berklee grads before her, Civello's move to New York City was inevitable. Searching for something musically closer to her Mediterranean roots, she immersed herself in Latin and Brazilian music, learning Spanish and Portuguese along the way. She also wrote her first song, "Parole Incerte" ("Uncertain Words"), about the misunderstandings that can come from the distance between a person and her loved ones.

Meanwhile, two of Civello's bandmates – pianist Alain Mallet and drummer Jamey Haddad – had begun working with Paul Simon and invited her to a rehearsal. It was there that she met producer Russ Titelman and left him with a demo of “Parole Incerte.” He called the very next day and insisted, “You are a songwriter. Forget about everything else you are doing. You have to write.” Civello began composing lyrics in English. She studied the work of Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, and others and sang background vocals on Taylor’s *October Road*. She also joined Tony Bennett for a duet on his upcoming Columbia release.

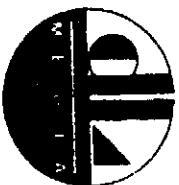
Her debut album’s title track, “Last Quarter Moon,” speaks to this crossroads in her life, a place of transition and rebirth. “People rarely appeal to the last quarter of the moon,” Civello explains. “It always evokes a crisis in consciousness; there’s a struggle between the desire for renewal and the things from the past that stand in the way.”

The album opens with the melancholy “Nature Song,” bearing witness to the change of seasons (not unlike Stevie Wonder’s “Summer Soft”), while the spirited “Ora” (“Now”) speaks to living in the moment. “I had almost every song on the album,” recalls Civello, “when Russ called me to say that Burt Bacharach was interested in writing with me.” “Trouble” came together during a three day session at Bacharach’s Los Angeles home. Civello arrived with an idea for the melody; they shaped and refined it as a team. Two handsome, yet lesser known Brazilian songs round out the album’s offerings: “Outono” (“Autumn”) by Rosa Passos, a favorite among music aficionados, and guitarist Toninho Horta’s “Beijo Partido” (“Broken Kiss”).

The coterie of outstanding session musicians on the album further represents Civello’s musical travels. Titelman brought legendary drummer Steve Gadd, organist and pianist Larry Goldings, cellist Mark Stewart, vocalist Daniel Jobim – grandson of the famous songwriter Antonio Carlos Jobim – on board. Civello chose Adam Rogers, Michael Brecker’s guitarist, and drummer Paulo Braga—“I couldn’t sing Brazilian songs without using the drummer that Elis Regina and Milton Nascimento had,” she exclaims. Rising talents include saxophonists Jimmy Greene and Miguel Zenon and bassist Ben Street. Mallet, Haddad, guitarist Guilherme Monteiro, drummer Dan Reiser, and bassist Alex Alvear, her co-writer on “Ora,” have known her since her Boston days.

“Jazz is the most incredible diving machine when it comes to going really deep into music,” says Civello, about her path of discovery, one sure to continue in the future. “But I knew I couldn’t be the new Ella Fitzgerald; I couldn’t be the new Shirley Horn. I learned all different kinds of music and then I said to myself, ‘I need to find my own voice. Time to unlearn now, time to be free.’ It’s like a hot air balloon: To be able to fly you have to throw off the sandbags. I want to be as light as I can—*light as a feather*.”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JANUARY 19, 2004

**CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED JAZZ VOCALIST KITTY MARGOLIS
RETURNS TO HER ROOTS WITH HEART & SOUL: LIVE IN SAN FRANCISCO
TO CELEBRATE MAD-KAT RECORDS 15TH ANNIVERSARY**

"Margolis offered a performance that was a brilliant reminder of the great pleasures of jazz singing when it is delivered by a mature, gifted, creative artist. Her set dispensed multileveled layers of pleasure. There was, first of all, the sheer sense of joy in performing that was a palpable presence in everything she did. Completely centered, completely in the moment, Margolis' total involvement in the enjoyment of making music reached out to embrace her players. Underlying and enhancing all her other extraordinary qualities, there was Margolis' sophisticated musicality-- an ear for harmony, an improvisational imagination and a buoyant sense of rhythmic swing that place her at the very top level of the jazz vocal art." — Don Heckman, *The Los Angeles Times*

Many musicians shy away from making live albums for fear that they will reveal their own flaws and imperfections. Or they allow so much intervention by recording engineers after the fact that today's so-called "live" albums might as well have been recorded in the studio; the resulting products sound canned and lifeless. Fortunately, vocalist Kitty Margolis has never been one to play it safe. **Heart & Soul: Live in San Francisco**, her fifth recording as a leader, feels as direct and spontaneous as the greatest live jazz performances.

Recorded on June 5 and 6, 2003 at the old On Broadway Theater in San Francisco's North Beach, the album brilliantly captures the raw energy, intimacy, humor and unpredictable excitement of the singer's club set, down to Margolis' dialogue with the audience and off-the-cuff humor. As *Jazziz* Magazine observed, "Her greatest strength is her attitude: a nerve, knowing verve that captures the spirit of the present without drowning out the past." Margolis is a tremendous improviser, a risk-taker at her very core, one reason that a live album holds such appeal for her and makes an especially welcome vehicle for her talents. Here she can truly stretch out.

Another is that it brings Margolis' recording career to date full circle. Some may associate Margolis with eclectic and meticulously produced studio albums; for example, her *Straight Up With a Twist* uses layers of sound and adventurous grooves to complete sparkling, multi-faceted arrangements that draw on world music. (Margolis pursued Recording Arts at San Francisco State University, skills that she has put to use in her projects.) But those who have followed her from the beginning will recall her very first recording: *Live at the Jazz Workshop*, a burning trio record made at the famed San Francisco club. It was considered a daring move for an emerging artist to debut with a live CD. It also launched her own Mad-Kat recording label.

Heart & Soul marks the 15th anniversary of Mad-Kat, co-founded with friend and fellow Bay Area vocalist Madeline Eastman and inspired by legendary vocalist Betty Carter's Bet-Car label. Few artists ran their own indies at the time the two started the label in 1988; in fact, Margolis and Eastman were pioneers in the Bay Area. Spurred on by the desire to "call our own creative

(over)

shots," this path has allowed Margolis more freedom to produce intelligent and challenging music. Owning and controlling her own work has had other advantages as well, such as keeping her albums constantly in print.

A fourth generation Californian and Bay Area native, Margolis' musical adventures began with playing the guitar in a variety of bands during high school; she's been gigging since her teens. While she collected field recordings from across the globe at home, trips to the legendary Fillmore introduced her to the music of Miles Davis, B.B. King, Janis Joplin and the Grateful Dead. She enrolled at Harvard University, where she worked with a Western swing band, but ultimately earned her degree from San Francisco State. There she studied with veteran saxophonist John Handy, formed her own jazz unit and honed her vocal technique and improvisational ability in the thriving Bay Area club scene. Fortuitously, her apartment was located near the now defunct San Francisco club Keystone Korner, where she came to know jazz legends of the past and present, many of whom she would ultimately perform with.

Again and again, critics have dubbed Margolis the inheritor of the great vocal jazz tradition as passed down from Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Carmen McRae, and Betty Carter. Their influence can be felt on *Heart & Soul* – Margolis' version of "My Favorite Things" can't help but recall Carter's – yet Margolis is very much an innovator within this tradition. Even in the pared down trio setting, her arrangements feel fresh. "Sleeping Bee" makes so much more sense with its introductory verse intact, while Margolis' vamp on "Surrey With the Fringe on Top" takes playful twists and turns. Traditionally treated as a slow dirge, the singer turns "Summertime" into a blazing scat tour de force and "Secret Love" becomes a sweet, poignant celebration. The title track – familiar to most as a tune young children love to pound out at the piano – is beautifully transformed into a languid ballad.

Margolis' co-conspirators for this special occasion – pianist Michael Bluestein, bassist Jon Evans, and drummer Allison Miller – set the stage for her explorations. Each is a talent in his or her own right. Bluestein, who recently toured with Boz Scaggs, has made three recordings as a leader featuring his own compositions and interpretations of songs by performers as varied as Herbie Hancock and Cat Stevens. Evans tours with pop star Tori Amos, while Miller has performed and recorded with the likes of Natalie Merchant, Kenny Barron, Mike Stern, and Oliver Lake. *Heart & Soul* was co-produced by Margolis and Alfonso Montuori.

Margolis' last album "Left Coast Life" was nominated for the 2003 California Music Award for Best Jazz Album as well as being chosen "#1 Jazz Vocal Release" by *The International Association for Jazz Education Journal*. She has been named *DownBeat's* Talent Deserving Wider Recognition five times and in 1997 won the BAMMIE (Bay Area Music Award) for "Outstanding Jazz Vocalist." In 1999 she was nominated for the Soul Train "Lady of Soul" Award. She has graced the stages of the most prominent performance venues and festivals the world over including The Kennedy Center, London's Royal Festival Hall, the Tel Aviv Opera House, Gstaad's Yehudi Menuhin Music Festival, her native San Francisco Jazz Festival, Sydney International Arts, North Sea, Monterey, Telluride, and Seattle's Earshot Jazz Festival.

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Greg Skaff

Twenty years of performing, both internationally and as a regular on the New York jazz scene, has earned guitarist Greg Skaff a reputation as a gifted bandleader and sideman. Skaff's highly versatile playing – from earth-scorching blues to fluid ballads and virtuosic bebop – has merited his place alongside such legends as Stanley Turrentine, Gloria Lynne, Ruth Brown, and Freddie Hubbard. His own quartet performs regularly in New York City and around the country, enjoying staunch critical praise for its release, *Blues and Other News* (Double-Time).

Skaff only began learning guitar in his mid-teens, teaching himself to play classic rock, R&B, and, most significantly, the blues. Opportunities to hear jazz may have been limited in Wichita, Kansas where he grew up, but organ combos, like those led by Jack McDuff and Lou Donaldson, passed through, making a strong impression on the young guitarist. Jay McShann, who spent a six-month stint playing an unlikely roadside bar, became another point of reference— especially after Skaff innocently realized the bandleader was more than just some colorful local veteran. Perhaps Skaff's most formative experience, however, came with a borrowed copy of George Benson's *It's Upown*. Overwhelmed by the creative possibilities of jazz guitar, Skaff began listening intently, transcribing the work of other artists, teaching himself music theory, and perfecting his now seemingly effortless technique.

In the early 1980s, he relocated to New York, expanding his opportunities for study and performance. A last minute audition opened the first of many doors; as a result, he was recruited for Stanley Turrentine's quintet and found himself playing Carnegie Hall the following evening. Skaff credits Turrentine for developing his ability to communicate with audiences and lock into an unshakable rhythmic pocket. In his five years with that quintet, Skaff toured Europe, Japan, South America, and South Africa, and appeared at the Montreal Jazz Festival and New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival.

Since that time, Skaff has served in the bands of vocalists Gloria Lynne, Ruth Brown, and, currently, Kevin Mahogany. He is also a long-time member of saxophonist Bobby Watson's group and appears on Watson's current release, *Quiet As It's Kept* (Red Records). He has worked as R&B/dance diva Martha Wash's musical director for the past eight years. Freddie Hubbard has employed his talents for a number of special engagements – such as dates at New York's Jazz Standard – while Skaff's other freelance credits include work with Lonnie Smith, singers Will Downing and Jimmy Scott. In 1991, Skaff received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to write and perform his own work.

As for future projects, the guitarist points to a working trio comprised of himself, organist Mike LeDonne, and drummer Lenny White. His own quartet, whose formidable talents include pianist Bruce Barth, bassist Tony Scherr, and drummer Gregory Hutchinson, continues much as it did on *Blues and Other News*, featuring Skaff's original compositions alongside bebop and songbook standards. Skaff endorses D'Angelico jazz guitars.

Praise for Greg Skaff, *Blues and Other News*:

It's an exuberant and expansive debut... *Jazz Times*

Guitar aficionados should make sure they pick this one up... *Cadence*

Greg Skaff plays as deftly as Miss [Ruth] Brown sings... *Boston Globe*

Greg is the most versatile and imaginative guitarist I've played with. He has one foot in the past and one foot in the future, so anything the music calls for... he's there!!!

Bobby Watson

When Greg and his guitar grace the stage with me, they always bring out the best in me and my shows.

Gloria Lynne

* * *

Discography

As leader:

Blues and Other News (Double-Time Records DTRCD-111, 1996).

As sideman:

Will Downing, *All the Man You Need* (Polygram 157881, 2000).

Bobby Watson, *Quiet As Its Kept* (Red Records 123284, 1999).

Will Downing, *Moods* (Mercury 528755, 1995).

Bobby Watson, *Urban Renewal* (Kokopelli Records 1309, 1995).

Ruth Brown, *Live in London* (Jazz House 42, 1995).

Martha Wash, *Martha Wash* (RCA 66052-2, 1993).

Greg Skaff – Program Biography

Twenty years of performing, both internationally and as a regular on the New York jazz scene, has earned guitarist Greg Skaff a reputation as a gifted bandleader and sideman. Skaff, a native of Wichita, Kansas, only began learning guitar in his mid-teens and is largely self-taught. His seemingly effortless technique and highly versatile playing – from earth-scorching blues to fluid ballads and virtuosic bebop – has merited his work alongside such legends as Stanley Turrentine, Gloria Lynne, Ruth Brown, Freddie Hubbard, Lonnie Smith, Jimmy Scott, Kevin Mahogany, Will Downing, Martha Wash, and Bobby Watson. In 1991, Skaff received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. His quartet performs regularly in New York City and around the country, enjoying staunch critical praise for its release, *Blues and Other News* (Double-Time).

Gabriele Tranchina

Vocalist Gabriele Tranchina embodies a rare combination of European charm and New York style. Having left her native Germany in 1988, the source for her gracious manner of performance, Tranchina has absorbed all that her adopted land has to offer. Her broad repertoire – from the popular songbook and the blues to samba and a variety of Latin forms – is the veritable gumbo that constitutes American jazz. She truly brings an international perspective to her songs: no wonder “Old Country,” the title track of her new CD, contains such great insight.

Tranchina’s talents have earned her a place on the stages of Birdland, the Blue Note, Metronome, the New Yorker Club, the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, and the National Academy Museum, among others. For a time, she hosted the Squire’s popular open mic night. Her versatility with languages – she is tri-lingual and sings in English, German and French as well as Portuguese, Italian, and Spanish – has made her an asset to tour operators and hotels. She has performed for special events at New York’s Marriott Marquis, Rockefeller Center’s Sea Grill, and on Spirit Cruises. Her husband, the pianist Joe Vincent Trachina, often accompanies her.

In addition to her busy schedule in the Tri-State area, Gabriele has won praise in her native Germany for appearances at the Hessen Jazzfest, Jazzfest Mörfelden-Walldorf, the Mainz Arts and Crafts Festival, as well as Darmstadt’s Heinerfest and Hochzeitsturnfest. That tiny city, known as a center of German jazz, also boasts numerous clubs: Tranchina has played its prestigious Achteckiges Haus, Oktave Jazzclub, and Café KUK. Renowned composer/big band leader Connie Scheffel chose Tranchina to record a number of his works. Beritz’s *Rush Hour German* – a boy-meets-girl, musical theater adventure that departs from standard format language tapes – also features Tranchina’s voice.

She holds a BFA in Music and Physical Education with a teaching degree from J.W. Goethe University in Frankfurt. By the age of 20, Tranchina had traveled throughout Europe and spent a year touring India, Nepal, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. She pursued a career as a dancer and arrived in New York City to further her studies. Enrolled as a foreign student at Peridance and then the Broadway Dance Center/Ballet Arts, Tranchina danced for Ned Williams William Adair, Igal Perri and several other up-and-coming choreographers. Although an injury caused her to retire in 1993, New York and its music scene would not let her go.

She would meet vocal legends Mark Murphy and Sheila Jordan, now long time friends and mentors, and began to organize vocal workshops for them (a story detailed in “Mark Murphy: Workshops Without Water Wings” *Jazz Times* Educational Supplement, 2002). Tranchina also studied with vocalists Nancy Marano, Dominique Eade, and Jay Clayton, with lessons in improvisation from pianist Connie Crothers. Sessions with vocal coach Jeannie Lovetri, who heads the New York Voice Teachers Association and counts Meredith Monk and Helen Merrill among her pupils, helped Tranchina perfect her spectacular three octave range. She enjoys a sound reminiscent of “cool school” vocalists June Christy and Chris Connor.

She embodies the new voice of jazz. Technically perfect, she interprets classic Cole Porter melodies in an expressive and strong willed manner, whereas tunes like "Stormy Monday, arouse reminiscences of the great Billie Holiday.

—*Darmstädter Echo*

In her interpretations, one experiences the "melting pot" of New York so clearly that one feels transported there...

—*Gross-Gerauer Wochenblatt*

An impressive voice... an unforgettable evening.

—*Freitags-Anzeiger*, Mörfelden-Walldorf

Gabi T. is a wonder... She sings like a bird and swings and swings and swings until the cows come home.

—Mark Murphy

Joe Vincent Tranchina

Joe Vincent Tranchina, recognized for the past six years by ASCAP's "Popular Music Award" and commissions from the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts "Best of the Bronx" series, is an established pianist, composer, arranger, and accompanist. He has performed in the major venues throughout New York City and the surrounding area – Birdland, the Oak Room, Blue Note, Iridium, Village Gate, and Lenox Lounge among others – and toured abroad in Germany, Switzerland, Greece, and Japan. His radio appearances include WBAI's "Stolen Moments," with host Mahmoud Ibrahim; he has been a guest on the cable access programs of tenor legend Harold Ousley and the colorful drummer Bernice "Boom Boom" Brooks.

The author of over 1000 songs and compositions, Tranchina's work ranges from straight-ahead, fusion, and Brazilian jazz to new age, pop, classical. The breadth speaks to his incredible versatility as a musician; Tranchina is equally comfortable in all of these genres. His musical expressions have clearly been steeped in the vocabulary of bebop, but he remains a daring and sensitive melodist. A capable leader as well as a dependable sideman, Tranchina frequently accompanies his wife, the singer Gabriele Tranchina.

Joe began his musical studies at the age of nine on accordion; his parents asked him to choose between joining the Boy Scouts and lessons peddled door to door by the local music school. His future held few campfires, but many musical merit badges. When a family piano was purchased for the education of a younger sibling, the teenager transferred his musical knowledge to the instrument without much formal instruction. He "discovered" jazz while scanning the radio dial: Ella Fitzgerald's "How High the Moon" and John Coltrane's "Ascension" simply mesmerized him. The dial never moved again.

Tranchina, who holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance from Hofstra University, continued his musical studies with piano legends Sir Roland Hanna and Harold Mabern; the two taught master classes through Jazz Interactions, an organization sponsoring professional workshops. Tranchina also benefited from ASCAP film and theater scoring workshops with Paul Chihara.

He composed the original score for Barbara Reiter's documentary *Significance*, an interesting look at the International Declaration of Human Rights, and has contributed English lyrics to the compositions of celebrated German composer/big band leader Conny Scheffel. Tranchina frequently accompanies master classes for vocal legends Mark Murphy and Sheila Jordan. He worked for many years as a studio pianist at South Park Recording Studios, laying down tracks with familiar jingles and educational disks for dance classes. In addition, he has authored two books on music theory: *The Mixed Modal Approach to Contemporary Improvisation: A Handbook for All Instruments* (Studio P/R) and *Linear and Structural Improvisation in Conjunction with the Overtone Series* (Charles Colin).

Not to be outdone was the man tickling the ivories – the talented pianist Joe Vincent Tranchina – whose artistry was on display.

—*Rockland County Times*

Accompanying [Cecil Bridgewater] were the other seriously talented members of the series including... keyboardist extraordinaire Joe Tranchina.

—*Q Guide to the Arts*

The Spiritus Rector of this evening was Joe Tranchina, who accompanied on electric piano with fast hands and improvised effortlessly. His soloing remind me a little of Monty Alexander, but you could also hear a touch of Mike Melillo, the unforgettable pianist of the Phil Woods Quartet.

—*Darmstädter Echo*

Joe Tranchina... an outstanding performer on this fine CD.

—*JazzReview.com*

Audrey Silver

Vocalist Audrey Silver may be a relative newcomer to the jazz scene, but she is already impressing audiences all over New York City as a warm and sensitive stylist. A four-month engagement at the Mansfield Hotel's M Bar last spring readied her for this year's five-month run at Club Macanudo on Manhattan's Upper East Side. Silver has likewise become a familiar face at The Cutting Room, Prohibition, Cleopatra's Needle, and the Anyway Café in Brooklyn. The steady stream of appearances is a testament to her instantaneous appeal and classic approach to the American songbook.

Delicious articulation and velveteen delivery lends "Up Jumped Spring" and "This Can't Be Love" the charms of a cozy romance—with an added touch of mischief. Silver's ballads are understated and intelligent. Although she considers Joe Williams, Anita O'Day, Bill Evans, and Stan Getz among her major influences, Silver has also received inspiration from artists as diverse as pop diva Annie Lennox and Brazilian jazz guitarist/composer Djavan. She has learned the basics of Yoruban chanting, delved into the atonal work of classical composer Arnold Schoenberg while a chorister, and played chamber music while growing up, experiences that have all expanded her hearing and informed her approach to leading a jazz ensemble.

Silver's current band is an assembly of stellar musicians: the talented pianist Jon Raney, son of jazz guitar legend Jimmy Raney and a student of Kenny Barron; bassist Tom Hubbard, a veteran of the bands of Joe Williams and Freddy Cole, guitarist Ed MacEachen, who toured extensively with Chico Hamilton and Ernestine Anderson; and drummer Ronnie Zito, whose rhythmic skills drove the bands of Woody Herman and Bobby Darin.

Silver studied classical piano and cello from an early age during her childhood, but also had an early love of jazz and popular song. "While other girls were hanging posters of David Cassidy in their rooms," Silver confesses, "I was busy swooning over Fred Astaire." She took up tap dancing and spent countless hours perusing her dad's record collection; it was filled with Broadway musicals like *The Pajama Game* and *Guys and Dolls*. They provided an introduction to many jazz standards and ignited her passion for the form. During college, Silver founded The Higher Keys, Brown University's first co-ed jazz *a cappella* group; she transcribed favorites by the Mills Brothers and tried her hand at arranging. She still takes charge of the settings for her tunes.

Her interest in music led to employment in the marketing and A&R departments of CBS Masterworks (now SONY Classical) and then as the Director of Marketing for Chesky Records. She earned an MBA at Columbia Business School and also worked as an account executive for advertising giant Ogilvy & Mather before being drawn back to jazz.

In 1998, Silver began studying with vocal priestess Sheila Jordan. It was then that she first encountered Raney, who encouraged her to pursue a career as a singer. He worked

with her on a demo in 2000; the project included Zito and Jay Leonhart, a renowned bassist and chosen accompanist for Judy Garland and Tony Bennett. In addition, she has studied privately with Mark Murphy, winner of the *Downbeat* Readers Poll for Male Jazz Singer of the Year since 1996.

Most recently, Audrey recorded a new demo with songs that range from well-known chestnuts like “Embraceable You” to those destined to become songbook standards—Bob Dorough’s mournful “Small Day Tomorrow” being a prime example. She continues to expand her horizons and hone her gifts as a singer, bandleader, and arranger. They have already earned her considerable praise and attention.

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“It’s new and it’s good.”

—Jonathan Schwartz, Director of Jazz Programming for WNYC, on Silver’s demo

Her voice rings true, with lovely tone and fine diction. She seems to pick the right tempo for each song she chooses. The ballads don’t just die there—they move! And most of all, when there is a tempo, she swings!!! I dug it. You’ll dig it, too.

—Singer/pianist Bob Dorough

Audrey Silver has that rare quality of light, infectious swing that lights up her tall, willowy persona

—Vocalist Mark Murphy

Audrey Silver reminds you why you love jazz so much in the first place: you think you’ve understood a song for years and then someone comes along who brings a completely fresh meaning to it. Audrey is one of the rare singers who can do that.

—Bob Moylan, General Manager of Club Macanudo