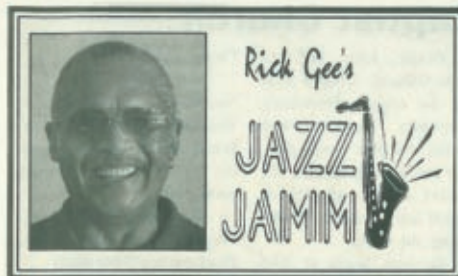


ENTERTAINMENT



Knights At The Pier



Stacey Knights

As previously mentioned in this column. The Pier in downtown St. Pete and the Smooth Jazz radio station WSJT (94.1 FM) sponsor a jazz concert on the second Sunday of the month.

Two weeks ago, a multi-talented musician worked her way through the audience outdoors on The Pier weaving a hypnotic musical spell. This was Stacey Knights alternating between the flute, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone, and vocalizing in between. Oh yeah, for good measure, let's throw in some guitar work. Knights is truly a one (wo) man band!

Knights began her musical career when she wrote a song to commemorate the name change of her elementary school in Massachusetts at the age of 10. The next year she started on saxophone in her middle school band. "I wanted to play the clarinet, and I cried when my Dad brought home a saxophone, but I took it anyway." Knights said on her musical beginnings. The rest, as they say, is history.

Forget about Knight' style in a particular category because it's not possible. She plays a potpourri of sounds that include adult contemporary, jazz, pop, Latin and a touch of R&B.

Interestingly enough, on this particular Sunday, Knights played solo using a "Sequencer" to provide various and exciting background music, background vocals and rhythm section. Personally, I am not enthralled by the use of sequencers. My preference is a "live" trio or a horn or horns up front accompanied by a "live" rhythm section. Nevertheless, I must admit that her presentation won me over - this time.

Knights opened her first musical set with a tribute to the late jazz-great saxophone player Grover Washington Jr. playing "Mr. Magic." This tune was handled masterfully, bringing back fond memories of Grover's own magical music. That tune was then followed with a well-

known vocal piece, "Smooth Operator." Although this song was strongly reminiscent of Sade, Knights' treatment of the tune demonstrated that she is capable of rendering familiar pop tunes in her own unique style. The audience seemed to thoroughly enjoy not only Knights' vocal presentation, but also her solos on tenor saxophone.

Two full musical sets were played with a 20-minute intermission. Before closing out the second set, Knights' played two original pieces that were my favorites of the day. They were Latin tunes "Night in Cordoba" and "Croatia" featuring her on flute that can be heard on her first CD, "Through the Window."

This CD has her complete musical group that includes Ron Reinhart, keyboards; Brad Carlton and Patty Samphy, guitar; Patrick Bettison and Tim George, bass; and David Reinhardt, drums and percussion. Fortunately, I own this CD and can definitely recommend that you include it in your smooth jazz collection.

Knights is presently working in the studio on her second and third CDs. She promises there will be some pleasant surprises including both her original composition and compositions of members in her group. Of this effort, she says, "I am very optimistic that these upcoming CDs will be life-size musical portraits of my current tastes and personal style."

Featured Female Artist

Florida Woman News



Stacey Knights
Singer-Entertainer

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Stacey Knights has to pause to find the words when asked, "What kind of music do you play?" The upbeat yet sultry songstress would love to be able to categorize it, but that is difficult to do when there is so much variety in her sound. "I combined elements of Adult Contemporary, Pop, Latin, Jazz, and a little R&B to create the sound I have today."

This last year has been a turning point in Stacey's career. Knights' debut CD, "Through The Window" displays her multi-musical talents featuring flute saxes and vocals. It has received national airplay on over 150 Smooth Jazz radio stations including Time Warner Digital Cable's "Music Choice". She also achieved distribution of her CD to major retail music chains. She opened for high profile acts such as Spyro Gyra, guitarists Peter White, Chieli Minucci (of Special EFX), and Steve Oliver, saxman Jimmy Reid and internationally reknown flautist Nestor Torres. "There is a whole generation of people out there who have matured too much to relate to the over-saturated teenage icon music. They have the desire to hear something that speaks to

them, with more contemporary ideas that relate to their adult lifestyle... with all its commitments and concerns. I'm sure of that, because I'm one of them! I have a family, and a home, and I want to make new music that reflects experiences common to me and my peers."

Summer will find Stacey on the road performing her mesmerizing and energizing show and giving radio interviews. "I am now pursuing events where I can get my sound out there to the right audience," says Knights, "I love playing outdoors because the natural surroundings inspire me to greater heights musically. It is such a thrill to be living the life I dreamed that I wanted and I want to share that wonderful feeling with anyone who will listen."

At this time she is recording her second CD. It contains both her original compositions and compositions of members in her band. Of this effort, Knights says, "This upcoming CD will be a lifesize musical portrait of my current tastes and personal style."

Stacey Knights Group

Jazz Concert
Sunday, April 17

Brunch noon - 3pm
Concert 1 - 5pm

Sunday Afternoon Jazz
Concert Series
at
Byg Kat
Wine Bar & Tavern
8th Ave. & Main St.
Downtown Safety Harbor
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Show Notes
The Café Jazz Newsletter

November 14, 2004
Edition #339

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Highlights! Greetings! I'm afraid that I may have gone a bit overboard with this edition of show notes but it's tough to be minimal when it comes to fabulous music, so please forgive my exuberance! In any event, apart from a blockbuster showcase cd and an FT segment to match, this program comes very close to being a two-hour Smooth Jazz highlight reel. Norman Brown sets the stage with Up 'N' At 'Em and we take off from there. Included is a long list of favourites, both past and present, all the way from Vonnie by Bass X to Spyro Gyra's You Can Count. Over the years, the closing set has evolved into a sort of "classic trax" feature that in a way both balances & compliments the FT feature. Here you'll be treated to some of the finest selections that this genre has to offer ... from Torcuato Mariano, Club 1600, Brenda Russell, and Brian Tarquin. There's more including a piece that's brand new to the program from Peter White as we delve a bit more deeply into Confidential.

And as added bonus, near the start of hour two, you can catch Outside the Box from Gene Cannon! This is a Café Jazz exclusive as we present a sneak preview of the title track from Gene's forthcoming cd. So that gives you just some idea of what lies in store. One thing is certain though, you won't want to miss any of this show!

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Southwest Shuffle - Stacey Knights: Although clarinet had been Stacey's first choice to play in the school band, when her dad brought home a sax she took that up instead. It turned out that she enjoyed practicing on the instrument, and it wasn't too long before she was at the head of her class. Shortly thereafter, Knights joined a summer band camp where she also took up flute. Unlike the sax, the flute was a quieter instrument that Stacey could play at any time of the day or night and as such, it well suited the part of her practice routine from midnight until 3am. By the time she was sixteen, Knights knew music was going to be her life. On a scholarship, she attended the State University in St. Cloud, MN for three years before transferring to North Texas State. However, meeting tuition & living expenses proved to be a struggle so that three years later, Knights moved to the Tampa Bay area of Florida

where her family had relocated. She played with several different bands, but it quickly became clear that if she was to develop her style and sound Stacey would have to set out on her own. In this regard, her act as a solo performer has flourished. Through the Window was her debut a few years back and proved to be a fine first effort which provided Knights with exposure on the national level in the USA.

When asked to describe her focus in music Stacey states and I quote: "There is a whole generation of people out there that ...have the desire to hear something that speaks to them with more contemporary ideas that relate to their adult lifestyle.. with all of its commitments and concerns. I'm sure of that, because I'm one of them! ...So that's where my music centers." In keeping with that statement Ms. Knights has just released *While You Dream*, her sophomore project. From that effort we're presenting *Southwest Shuffle*, an energetic track that features Stacey on sax with some fine guitar work from Brad Carlton!



Smooth Jazz with Attitude!... Knights plays a mean saxophone...she also plays flute AND she sings... Stacey's debut solo effort is a fun blending of pop and contemporary jazz. We find the project to be a great listen... you want to hit 'Play' again as soon as the last track finishes." - SmoothJazz.com



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