

# **UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN CONCERT SERIES 2017 – 2018**

## ***In association with: JAZZ AT THE BLUE LAMP 'SPOTLIGHT ON HER'***

***A SPECIAL CONCERT FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY FEATURING:  
NADYA ALBERTSSON QUINTET  
ABERDEEN JAZZ ORCHESTRA  
GEORGINA JACKSON: Vocals, Trumpet and Flugelhorn  
THE BLUE LAMP  
Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2018***

"Spotlight on Her" is a new three day event in Aberdeen to celebrate female performers on and around International Women's Day, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Thursday's special jazz concert began with a smaller support group, the Nadya Albertsson Quintet. Vocalist Nadya comes originally from Stockholm. She was supported by guitar, bass guitar, drumkit and saxophone making up the Quintet. Her Quintet may have been smaller in number but definitely not in quality. They had to begin their part of the concert against the hubbub of conversation in a totally packed Blue Lamp hotching with pre-concert excitement. It was not long however before they were playing to a silent and attentive audience. Nadya's singing and the playing of her Quintet had captured the fascination of the audience completely.

Later in the concert Georgina Jackson likened Nadya's vocal style to that of Ella Fitzgerald. The voice itself however was more of a free soaring soprano often remarkably delicate. Dare I say just the slightest touch in the voice of Blossom Dearie?

Nadya and her Quintet began their section with 'My Baby Just Cares for Me', a Nina Simone number. 'My Funny Valentine' had a seasoning of Latin in its rhythm with Richard Glassby on drumkit and the first of many fine sax solos from Matthew Kilner, both in the Quintet and later with the Jazz Orchestra.

Nadya's singing of 'Misty' was dreamy and free soaring followed by 'I'll Be Seeing You' with whispering drums from Richard Glassby. 'The Sunny Side of the Street' had a fantastic guitar solo and then the Quintet's final number 'Night in Tunisia' had fine scat singing from Nadya and a wonderful flourish of sax playing from Matthew. This was splendidly grown up jazz.

The Aberdeen Jazz Orchestra filled the Blue Lamp with their glorious big band sound. Led and introduced by trumpet player Alan Haggart, much of their music was drawn from the catalogue of Count Basie including Midnight Freight with trombone solo from Eddie McGovern, Count the Aces and Shiny Stockings with its muted trumpets and then a dazzling open trumpet solo from Gavin Hunter. Other top jazz soloists in this part of the concert came from sax player Matthew Kilner, pianist Fraser Gale, drummer Richard Glassby and on baritone sax, Justin Brooks. The American pieces from Count Basie were classy and finely polished while 'Moonglow' from the Ted Heath band with muted trumpets, wide ranging harmonies and another fine sax solo from Matthew Kilner sounded wonderfully smooth and suave.

All this was great but there was better still to come as soon as fabulous jazz singer and amazing trumpet virtuoso Georgina Jackson took the stage to wow the audience as only she could. She remembered the last time she was in Aberdeen when a man had called her "a bonnie wee chanter". She was delighted to find that same gentleman in Thursday's audience. The Aberdeen Jazz Orchestra rose to the occasion accompanying every one of Georgina's astonishingly contrasting styles of jazz to perfection. She launched her performance with a jaunty performance singing 'Let the Good Times Roll' and then both voice and trumpet were let loose to delight us with 'And the

Angels Sing'. Her trumpet playing certainly soared skywards in this piece. Changing to flugelhorn for an Andy Schofield arrangement of Autumn Leaves she was smooth and mellow although towards the end of the piece even the flugelhorn was made to soar skywards. 'That Old Black Magic' had that Ella Fitzgerald pizzazz with another fine sax solo from Matthew Kilner and then, smooth and romantic, Georgina charmed us all to join in with Charlie Chaplin's 'Smile.'

I certainly did not expect what was to follow. In the style of Maynard Ferguson it was Georgina's dazzling trumpet helter skelter ride through McArthur Park by Jimmy Webb. Originally recorded by Richard Harris, it has been described both as the worst song ever written and the best song ever written, a kind of musical Marmite I suppose. I tend to go with the latter, in fact I love it. I was surprised that Georgina and the band captured every part of the song with some very special jazz solos from the band. This was nothing short of magnificent.

The Aberdeen Jazz Orchestra opened the second half of the concert with their version of 'Sweet Georgia Brown' with Matthew on sax once again. 'Nostalgia in Times Square' had solos on trumpet from Gavin Hunter, Justin Brooks on baritone sax, Fraser Gale on piano as well as guitar, Colin Black and bass Bryan Chambers. After Duke Ellington's 'Take the A Train' stylishly played by the band, Georgina was back with her tribute to Shirley Bassey giving it lalady with 'Big Spender'.

Going back to the days of the Ted Heath Orchestra, Georgina and Alan Haggart duetted magnificently in another of my all time jazz favourites 'Stardust' by Hoagy Carmichael. I loved it. 'Basin Street Blues' with cup mute and then another surprise the Beatles 'Can't Buy Me Love' led to the final piece in the official programme, Louis Armstrong's 'What a Wonderful World' a perfect piece for Georgina, who like Louis, is a top singer and virtuoso trumpet player. Once again that was great but the Blue Lamp audience was not going to let Georgina get off that easily, so she told us all that, 'I Just Want To Make Love To you' as her encore. Right on Georgina!