



KENDRA SHANK QUARTET MOSAIC

FRANK KIMBROUGH - DEAN JOHNSON - TONY MORENO

FEATURING: BILLY DREWES - BEN MONDER

Produced by Kendra Shank & Andrew Rowan

Recorded June 18 & 19, 2008 by Manfred Knoop at Knoop Studios, River Edge, NJ, USA.

Mixing by Manfred Knoop & Tom Swift | Mastering by Tom Swift | A&R Challenge Records by Marcel van den Broek

Production Coördination by Jolien Plat | Band photo by Andrew Rowan | Photography by John Abbott

Make-up and Hair by Sokphalla Ban | Art Direction & Sleeve Design by Marcel van den Broek

75th Anniversary Neumann M149 vocal microphone provided by Pappas Consulting, Denver, CO.

“Water From Your Spring” text is from *The Essential Rumi*, © 1995 by Coleman Barks. Used by permission.

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VOICE
KENDRA SHANK

PIANO
FRANK KIMBROUGH

BASS
DEAN JOHNSON

DRUMS
TONY MORENO

SOPRANO &
TENOR SAXOPHONES,
CLARINET
BILLY DREWES

GUITAR
BEN MONDER

1. SO FAR AWAY - 5:09

(CAROLE KING)

2. LIFE'S MOSAIC - 6:15

(CEDAR WALTON, JOHN & PAULA HACKETT)

3. REFLECTIONS IN BLUE / BLUE SKIES - 8:47

(KENDRA SHANK / IRVING BERLIN)

4. LAUGHING AT LIFE / SMILE - 4:40

(CORNELL & BOB TODD, NICK & CHARLES KENNY
/ CHARLES CHAPLIN, JOHN TURNER & GEOFFREY PARSONS)

5. THE SHINING SEA - 4:54

(JOHNNY MANDEL, PEGGY LEE)

6. WATER FROM YOUR SPRING / BEAUTIFUL LOVE - 8:47

(POEM BY RUMI - TRANSLATION BY COLEMAN BARKS
/ VICTOR YOUNG, WAYNE KING, EGBERT VAN ALSTYNE, HAVEN GILLESPIE)

7. FOR DUKE - 6:44

(FRANK KIMBROUGH, MARYANNE DE PROPHETIS)

8. ALL OF YOU - 4:44

(COLE PORTER)

9. TIME REMEMBERED - 5:31

(BILL EVANS, PAUL LEWIS)

10. I'M MOVIN' ON - 6:36

(KIRK NUROCK, JUDY NIEMACK)

11. I'LL MEET YOU THERE - 4:38

(KIRK NUROCK, TEXTS ADAPTED FROM RUMI - TRANSLATION BY COLEMAN BARKS)

MOSAIC

I'm a lucky guy. This is my fourth collaboration with Kendra Shank: the results, as well as the process, just keep getting better. With *Mosaic*, we return to our non-formula formula: just play songs we love.

The band is familiar but never complacent. Since 1999, Kendra's collaboration with Frank Kimbrough, Dean Johnson and Tony Moreno has become magical. The plus two – Billy Drewes and Ben Monder – are frequent guests, and this stellar ensemble eschews set-in-stone arrangements in favor of an organic unfolding of the songs that often brings to mind the approach of the fabled Bill Evans trios. Says Kendra, "I wanted to capture the joy and spontaneity that this band has when performing together live." Manfred Knoop, our intrepid sound engineer, as well as a gifted musician, was the perfect compliment in the booth, hearing and reacting to the music on both the technical and emotional levels.

At the heart of a successful vocal jazz project, however, is repertoire. The songs chosen encompass a wide range of sources, yet they cohere as Kendra pinpoints each one's emotional core. Though not planned as such, there is a mini-tribute to compositions by pianists, from Frank Kimbrough's gorgeous, stately "For Duke," with lyrics by his wife, the distinctive singer/songwriter/poet Maryanne de Prophetis, to Cedar Walton's stirring "Life's Mosaic," Bill Evans' reflective "Time Remembered," and two bracing Kirk Nurock originals, "I'm Movin' On" (with lyrics by singer Judy Niemack) and "I'll Meet You There" (written for Kendra with texts adapted from the 13th century Sufi poet, Rumi).

Another pianist – as well as singer/songwriter – also represented here is Carole King, whose “So Far Away” Kendra has loved since she was 13. Chatting about the project early on in our planning, we both thought of this affecting ballad. In this performance Billy Drewes’ luminous clarinet solo matches the singer’s heartfelt storytelling. Listening carefully, however, throughout the session, it becomes clear that Kendra is revealing more of her inner self than ever. From “Reflections in Blue”/“Blue Skies” (“... a moment typical of our quartet: nothing was said – nothing planned – everyone just heard it and went with it, in spontaneous interplay,” says Kendra) to “The Shining Sea,” the emotion is unguarded and intimate. Reflecting on the latter, a Johnny Mandel/Peggy Lee gem, Kendra muses, “I grew up in a beach community and feel deeply connected to the ocean, the sounds of surf and of sea gulls. This story of love and longing in that seaside setting gives me a vivid déjà vu every time I sing it – like I’m walking through a movie of my own life.” This is a song I thought would be perfect for Kendra, and her performance bears this out.

The medley “Laughing at Life”/“Smile” nods to Billie Holiday and Tony Bennett, respectively, while “All of You” and “Water From Your Spring”/“Beautiful Love” complete *Mosaic* where, as Kendra notes, “each musician is essential to the music sounding the way it does.” She continues, “It’s a collaborative approach to the music, loose and open, where anything can happen.”

Many will find that these session notes are more personal than one usually sees today, but this music demands it. It is personal, played by musicians who operate from the head *and* the heart.

— Andrew Rowan

I'LL MEET YOU THERE

(Music: Kirk Nurock, Text: adapted from Rumi, translation by Coleman Barks)

Out beyond ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing,
There is a field. I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down in that grass,
The world is too full to talk about.
Ideas and language, even the phrase "each other"
Doesn't make any sense.
I'll meet you there.
The minute I heard my first love story
I started looking for you.
Where the two worlds touch, I'll meet you there.

Out beyond ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing,
There is a field. I'll meet you there.
Lovers don't finally meet somewhere;
They're in each other all along.
Where the two worlds touch, I'll meet you there.
I'll meet you there.

REFLECTIONS IN BLUE

(Kendra Shank)

Blue...

Blue were the color of his eyes, on the day he left me.

Blue...

And blue was the color of my heart, when he said “good-bye.”

Blue...

Then *you* came in view. Blue takes another hue.

No more good-byes. No more good-byes...

(Just blue skies, smiling at me...)



Tony Moreno, Ben Monder, Dean Johnson,
Kendra Shank, Frank Kimbrough, Billy Drewes.

FROM KENDRA

Mosaics... our experiences, relationships, choices, forming a lifetime... individuals joining in community – each person part of a larger whole, both locally and globally... in improvised music, each musician contributing her/his unique personality of textures, colors, stories, emotions, to create a work of art greater than the sum of its parts – a paradigm for a way of living, of embracing our diversity and coming together in unity.

I'm deeply grateful to everyone who participated in creating this album – each one is an essential “tile” in the mosaic. Thanks to Frank, Dean, Tony, Billy and Ben for your inspired, sensitive playing, sonic surprises, and collaborative spirit. To Andy Rowan for your dedication, keen ears, song scouting and so much more. To Manfred Knoop for your generosity, superb sound and amazing ears, and to Birgit, Kira and Nicholas for your hospitality. To Tom Swift for mixing and mastering, John Abbott for the beautiful photos, and Mike Pappas for the vocal mic. And special thanks to Anne de Jong, Marcel van den Broek, Chris Ellis and everyone at Challenge Records for believing in this music and making this project possible.

Thanks also to Kirk Nurock, Maryanne de Prophetis, Judy Niemack, Keith Ghion, Forrest Faubion, Bryan Huitt, Jay Clayton, Andrew Freund, Liesl Freund, Kyoko Kitamura, Sokphalla Ban, Scott Ellard & the folks at 55 Bar, Don & Maureen Sickler at Second Floor Music, Judy Bell at The Richmond Organization, and to my family for their love and support.

– *Kendra Shank*



