DYNAMIC AUDIO & VIDEO

SARAH VAUGHAN

LIVE IN '58 & '64







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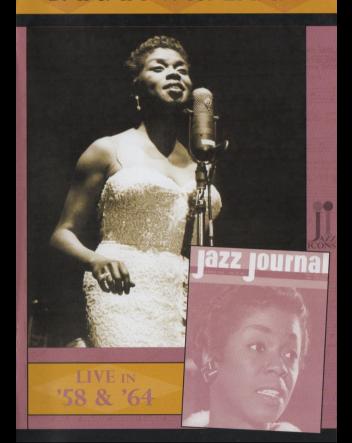
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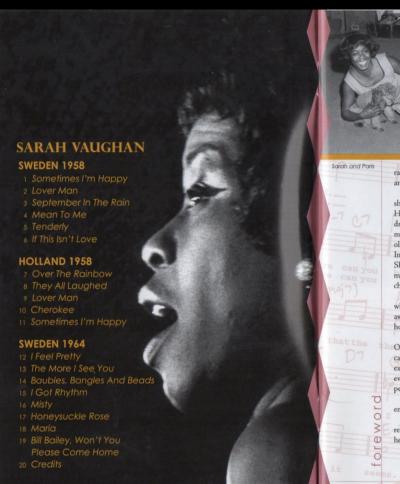


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SARAH VAUGHAN LIVE IN '58 & '64

SARAH VAUGHAN





rowing up with my mom was probably pretty similar to any other childhood. However, there was one big difference... I had to share my mom with millions of people whom I did not know and who all claimed to love her just as much. But they knew a different Sarah Vaughan.

Sarah...Sassie...Mom. She was all of them rolled into one beautiful woman. It was a very

rare occasion when the three crossed paths. Mom is the one I knew best and will carry in my heart for the rest of my life.

At home she was a typical, proud mom. Being an only child, I was showered with all the attention I could handle. She was an amazing cook. Her fried chicken was the best! She loved to sew and made my prom dress. Most important of all, she was always there for me. She watched my track meets and attended every special event. When I was ten years old, I had my first piano concert. Mom was in Europe doing a concert. Imagine my surprise when I looked up and saw her in the audience! She flew home and went back to Europe the next day, just to support me. That is what she did her entire life as my mom, best friend and cheerleader.

In the summers, I went on tour with her. It was then that I realized what an amazing performer she was. I would watch from the wings in awe. Every night the songs would be a little bit different depending on how she felt. She always sang from her heart.

One of my mom's last concerts was in Japan with the Philharmonic Orchestra. She was not well and singing with only half of her lung capacity. Everyone thought it was amazing that she could still perform, except me. You see, I understood that God's gift did not and would not ever fail her. She was truly at peace and happiest when she was on stage performing.

From the early performances that you see on this DVD until the end, her talent as a performer and a human being was unsurpassed.

I hope you enjoy watching these performances as much as I did. They really capture the young Sarah before the Sass. She's sweet and sultry with her youthfulness shining through. She is truly the "Divine One."

—Paris Vaughan Courtnall June 2007



SARAH VAUGHAN IN EUROPE

arah Vaughan arguably was the most phenomenal singer of her century. Musicians loved her. Most were in awe of her. All respected what they almost unanimously agreed was her innate musicality. "She was *born* with a gift," insisted towering blues and ballad singer loe Williams.

"She sings like a horn," John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie praised. "She can sing notes that other people can't even hear."

Unlike many of her contemporary divas, she was reared the only child in a stable, religious, strict and loving home in Newark, New Jersey. Her father, Asbury 'Jake' 'Vaughan disapproved of show business. Her mother, who sang with Sarah in the Mt. Zion Baptist Church Choir, was more understanding. Sarah absorbed essential musical grounding through piano and organ lessons from the ages of seven to fifteen. At twelve, she became one of Mt. Zion's regular organists.

On a dare, at eighteen, she sneaked out of the house in Newark, took a train to Harlem with her girlfriends, entered the Apollo Theater's Amateur Night contest and won the ten-dollar first prize, singing "Body and Soul". Fortuitously, singer Billy Eckstine, then with the Hines band, heard her and convinced his boss to hire her. She became the aggregation's second pianist and what was then universally called "the girl singer," alongside such soon-to-be-famous bebop explorers as Gillespie, Charlie Parker and Bennie Green. Within a year, Eckstine took them with him to start his own band. In 1944, Sarah left Billy's highly praised but commercially floundering orchestra to try to become a solo attraction, singing and accompanying herself on piano in the clubs on New York's 52nd Street.

From the beginning of her career, she had more than musical respect to earn. At nineteen, the only female on the road with the Earl "Fatha" Hines big band, she carried her own bags, shared the substandard and segregated traveling conditions of the early 1940s, asked for no special treatment, and was accepted as "one of the fellas." Yet Sarah Vaughan also evolved into a poised and glamorous lady.

Endowed with perfect pitch, a near-three-octave range, a flexible purity of tone and a conceptually adventurous musical spirit, Sarah Vaughan had to sing. It was her compulsion and her joy. On days off, weeks blocked out for rest and recreation, or sometimes in the hours after her own concerts, she visited clubs to hear other singers and instrumentalists. If not invited to sing, she would volunteer.

One night, she and pal Gillespie "sat in" unexpectedly with trumpeter Bill Berry's big band. Another night, she and Carmen McRae, friends since their 1940s Braddock Hotel days in Harlem, surprised audiences as well as performers on a California bandstand by suddenly taking over the microphone for a duet. At McRae's unforgettable birthday parties, Sarah always played the piano, singing along with Bill Henderson, Carmen and Della Reese. Also, Sarah repeatedly showed up as an unbooked guest vocalist anywhere that master pianist Jimmy Rowles's name was on the marquee.

The musicians Sarah hired were energized by her nightly musical challenges. They considered themselves well paid and were deservingly treated as fine artists, but any accompanist whose offstage over-indulgence adversely affected him onstage risked being dismissed.

Still, everyone associated with Sarah said that she was very shy. Eckstine, her early mentor and idol, ten years her senior, called her his "little sister." So did trombonist Benny Powell, who recorded with her frequently from the 1950s and always felt "protective" of her even though he is six years her junior. "She was really like the whole Basie band's little sister," Benny adds.

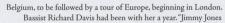
"When she would talk in her little girl voice, it was the total opposite of who Sarah really was," Williams reports. "It was just her way of dealing with her shyness."

Sarah treasured her privacy and long-term close-ness with special friends, colleagues and family—most especially her daughter and her mother, Ada Vaughan. Throughout her career, Sarah tended to avoid face-to-face interviews, but given the opportunity to write a response to questions, she would express herself thoughtfully and voluminously.

"Sarah Vaughan was such a complicated person," her daughter, actress Paris Vaughan observes. "And I'm not quite sure if there's anyone, if they're being truthful, that can say, 'I know who this woman was... She was different people with different people. She was the strongest woman that I know."

Some of her favorite compositions truly did seem to mirror her life and emotions. She recorded them often over the years as they became permanent, freshly interpreted elements of her repertoire. She longed to be able to achieve that elusive fantasy of simultaneous professional success and romantic domesticity. Curiously, she recorded Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne's poignant"! Fall In Love Too Easily" only once—in July, 1962. It could have, but did not, become a signature piece.

By 1958, both her jazz and popular recordings were selling well. She had topped jazz magazine polls internationally and headlined concerts at Carnegie Hall and major festivals in Europe and the United States. The Department of State invited Sarah to be one of the artists representing her country at the World's Fair in Brussels,



bassist richard Davis had been with her a year. Jimmy Jones was the piano player when I arrived. He said, I can go anywhere, and Sarah will follow me, or Sarah can go anywhere, and I follow her. I agreed. That's what made it so beautiful playing with her. She had all that range!

"She was a monster. I mean that in a positive way. Sarah was like any horn, like a saxophone player. What she did with a lyric, what she did with the sound of her voice, she would bend those notes into five different shapes. One note. Five different shapes! And you say, 'God, what's she gonna do next?' And she could scat her butt off. too."

In 2007, Davis observes his thirtieth year as Professor of European Classical Music at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"When I joined Sarah at a nightclub in Canton, Ohio, it was for the second time. The first time lasted one day in California. When Sarah and three girlfriends listening to the trio's rehearsal heard that my wife wanted me home in New York for the birth of our child, Sarah and her husband [George Treadwell] drove me straight to the airport. Months later, while I was at the Hickory House in midtown Manhattan, Ronnell Bright and Papa Jo Jones would come in and urge me to call Sarah. Jo said, 'Man, your kid don't need you till he's twelve years old!' That was his way of saying, 'Get out there.' And Sarah's response was something like 'When you gonna get back out here?' She still wanted me."

By early 1958, Ronnell, whom Sarah had listened to intently when he played opposite her at Storyville in Boston, had become her new pianist. Drummer Roy Haynes submitted his two-week notice rather than go overseas, and since England was the next stop on their European odyssey, Sarah hired the highly recommended British drummer Art Morgan. Davis found Morgan sensitive and compatible and was under the impression that U.K. labor laws also had something to do with his being there.

The Swedish television program on this DVD was filmed following a month-long engagement at Cité Varieté in downtown Stockholm, according to the Swedish newspaper Estrad and Göran Wallén, now a concert impresario in that city.

Johnnie Garry, Sarah's road manager since they met during her 1946 gig at Barney Josephson's fabled Café Society Downtown, was coordinating the European itinerary. Johnnie delighted in everything about his job. Sarah not only depended upon his efficiency, she relied on his judgment so completely that she accepted his edict that her

stage wardrobe must be exclusively white. "She had her choice of what she would wear," he said, "but we convinced her about white." This facilitated his creating dramatic visual effects as she sang.

"In those days, it wasn't computer lighting," he relates. "You had levels you could hold if she wanted to slow down. You could never know what Sarah was going to do—except you couldn't write cues... If she sang something up-tempo, we'd brighten it up a little bit. On 'Mean To Me,' for example, we'd focus around her with some little medium red and blue and a little straw. We'd use the same pink spotlight on her face but we could fade out on her face if that was the mood. Her white wardrobe allowed us to project a pink face with a blue gown if that expressed what she was singing. Sarah had to trust you. She didn't like people who couldn't think for themselves.

"But those television shows—it was all black and white in those days—didn't have the opportunities for enhancement that we did for clubs and concert halls. Her white gowns looked nice on TV but the concern there was all for giving the cameras the illumination they needed," explains Garry, at this writing, production coordinator for lazzmobile in Harlem.

Besides being her lighting designer, Johnnie handled the myriad of details that came with performing on the road. "The only music we carried were her big band arrangements for when she sang with an orchestra. The trio didn't have any arrangements. They just sit down, maybe over coffee, and talk about what they want to do—nothing written down, nothing to carry to the next date."

Between the Swedish television broadcast on July 9, 1958 and The Weekend Show in Bussum, Holland, Satah joined Quincy Jones in Paris to record the first of three sessions for Vaughan and Violins, the exquisite album arranged and conducted by Jones, augmenting pianist Bright and bass violinist Davis with thirty-five French violins, eight cellos and violas, seven woodwinds, guitarist Pierre Cullaz, vibraphonist Michel Hausser, drummer Kenny Clarke and guest soloist, American saxophonist Zoot Sims.

From their first meeting, Sarah and Quincy's friendship was very close, and their professional association lasted nearly forty years. They were always in touch. He arranged large ensemble music, conducted, consulted, and produced her recordings and "hung out" as often as their schedules permitted. "I remember when four-year-old Paris told me how excited she was to be going back to 'Copeehagen," he recounts with an affectionate smile in his voice. "When I moved out to Brentwood [California], Sarah helped me all day, and we stayed up until nine o'clock in the morning...loved to hang...Sassy was very special to me."



For this DVD release, Quincy took time from his third globecircling in three-and-a-half months to call from Dubai, where he was working for the Quincy Jones Listen Up Foundation. His organization is concerned with urgent world health issues and connects underprivileged youth with technology, education, culture and music internationally.

"This DVD is so important. Today's kids must be exposed to their cultural heritage, and Sarah...we go w-a-a-a-a-a-y back...I must have met her when I had my big band in New York in 1953 or '54...They were our idols—Miles, Dizzy, Bird, Sarah."

Back in the States, within three months, Sarah recorded another of her many collaborations with the Count Basie band.

About that date, Benny Powell reminisces, "Sarah was a wonderful person, so easy to be around. I loved doing dates with her. She made everything so comfortable. That's why her performances then are still so good now. She set up an atmosphere of just pure joy and a kind of freedom so when you got to Sarah Vaughan's record dates, she was so very well prepared, we never did many takes. Her artistry inspired everybody to be as good as they could possibly be."

"Studios are very limiting. There's not the ambience you have in a club. Sarah would create a great environment. There would be food, wine, and a lot of laughter—a lot of jokes. All of that translated onto the recording. There's more than just music there. There's humanity, camaraderie, love of what you do very well. All that is there," reflects Powell, who, as a studio musician continued to record with Vaughan after he left Basie.

"Sarah Vaughan was different than other people I recorded with. First of all, she was one of the cats. And her dates usually started at night—7 to 10 or 7 to midnight, a groovy time to relax. She would walk in, and she was one of the musicians. She had little personal asides with almost everybody. She established such a good feeling that as soon as we came in the door, we could sense the excitement. All I knew was that I was having a ball recording with Sarah Vaughan and Count Basie. In hindsight, I see that this atmosphere didn't just appear. They set it up knowingly—or maybe not knowingly," he muses.

"At a Sarah Vaughan date, when you got finished, you felt like, damn, you mean somebody's going to pay me money for this, also? Much fun as I had, I should be paying them. Sarah was really accessible to musicians' hearts... If she liked you, she'd give up her time. You'd feel like this person can't be this nice and famous at the same time.

"She always surrounded herself with the greatest musicians because she was a musician herself. She didn't have to ask anybody who could play bass or drums. She knew!

"She could scar. She could swing. Her ballads were impeccable. It was so pure you'd swear you were listening to an instrument...a violin, I guess."

Buster Williams, in 1963, was not quite three years out of his Camden, New Jersey high school and playing in Birdland behind singer Betty Carter. Pianist Kirk Stuart approached Williams at the bar, saying, "I'm the piano player with Sarah Vaughan, she's looking for a bassist, and she would love you! Would you be interested?"

Next stop: Europe and London's Piccadilly Circus.

That was the location of the world-renowned Boosey & Hawkes musical instrument emporium where Buster anticipated finding the "Hawkes" bass violin of his dreams. The perfect bass turned out to be a "Hawkes" for sale in a store across the street but the young musician lacked two-thirds of the steep asking price, still the dealer allowed Buster to spend the entire afternoon playing and bonding with his intended.

He raced back to the hotel to tell Sarah of the forbidding terms of his new love. "Without hesitating, she said, 'Come to the room,' and she gave me the money. Our understanding was that I would repay her



in installments deducted from my salary, but I don't remember ever seeing any deductions."

Stuart, music director for Sarah's good friend Della Reese before taking over the trio backing Vaughan from 1961-63, became a professor of music at Howard University in Washington, D.C. for several years until his death in December 1982. The late George Hughes was a popular Chicago-based drummer who, according to colleagues, played away from his home city only once-to tour Europe with Sarah, 1963-64.

Hughes and Williams were elated at the monthlong Copenhagen tenure: "This was only our second

or third gig with her," Buster emphasizes." We would go to Tivoli Gardens every day and practice playing tempos together. It takes awhile to become a family but by the time we finished that rour, we were pretty tight. In fact, we sounded pretty tight on our album, Sassy Swings The Tivoli."

"Sassy" was the nickname bestowed by John Malachi, pianist in the Eckstine band and later Sarah's accompanist. Judged appropriate by all who knew her, the sobriquet stuck, and she liked it.

It was apparently during that tour that Sarah, Kirk Stuart, Buster Williams and George Hughes boarded the boat to Sweden for the *Live In Stockholm* relevision broadcast on this DVD, reprising the numbers they had been performing nightly at the Tivoli.



STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN July 9, 1958

n the first of the three television programs in this collection, this broadcast on Swedish TV, thirty-four-year-old Sarah Vaughan is in her ingénue mode, somewhat shyly but bravely announcing what she will sing. Sweetly demure in a non-Garryapproved dress, she offers a new reading of "Sometimes I'm Happy", the Leo Robin-Clifford Grey-Vincent Youmans song she first recorded on October 25, 1955. Certain numbers appealed to her so strongly, suggesting tantalizing new paths, that she not only kept them in her live repertoire, but she also called them repeatedly at recording sessions—this one on six occasions.

"Lover Man", as she explains, holds perennial significance, transporting her to her debut with Parker and Gillespie. Co-composer Roger "Ram" Ramirez (with Jimmy Davis and Jimmy Sherman), upon hearing that first recording of his tune, has been quoted that Diz and Bird "needed a creative singer like Sass to make them sound appealing." Here, she is very much the leader, subtly supported with just essential chords by Bright and Davis, and Morgan's delicate brushwork.

"September in the Rain" is relatively new to her repertoire but obviously energizing to the trio. Davis's grin is as expressive as his pizzicato. Her At Mr. Kelly's plug is for the live album she made with Davis less than a year earlier at the Chicago club. The Al Dubin-Harry Warren standard apparently did not meet her criteria for permanence. She recorded it only once.

Sarah's discovery of the improvisational potential in Roy Turk and Fred E. Ahlert's "Mean To Me" evolved from her initial foray on the Continental label, May 25,1945 with the Dizzy Gillespie Septet, featuring the stunning collaboration of Charlie Parker, Flip Phillips, Tadd Dameron, guitarist Bill De Arango, bassist Curly Russell and Max Roach. Here, thirteen years later, she mines fresh nuances.

Hearing the opening bars of Walter Gross's lovely "Tenderly" is always to anticipate the sound of Sarah Vaughan, so closely is she identified with the piece. Other very good singers recorded the song—lyries by Jack Lawrence—but none had her impact. Again, Morgan's brushes are perfect.

Deeply respectful of the composers of her music, she nearly always gave them spoken credit. Here, in what must have been a tense moment, her generosity backfires when she attributes "If This Isn't Love" from Finian's Rainbow to George Gershwin instead of the team of E.Y. Harburg and Burton Lane.



HOLLAND June 7, 1958

the lighting, but Johnny Garry's dazzling wardrobe supervision for this television show filmed in Bussum, Holland, dispels Sarah's recurring stagefright. Elegant in a sparkling silver-white gown of Garry's choosing, she projects a completely different persona from the one a month later on Swedish relevision.

"Over the Rainbow" is a composition to compel listeners to testify, as Buster Williams later would suggest, that "Yip" Harburg and Harold Arlen really conceived this ethereal classic to hear Sarahs exquisite voice soar stratospherically. Sorry, Judy Garland

Gershwin's music was so embraced by Vaughan that, in 1957, she recorded the two-volume (LPs) Sarah Vaughan Sings George Gershwin with Hal Mooney's orchestra, later re-issued on three CDs, which included "They All Laughed" from the 1937 film Shall We Dance. Her later Gershwin Live with Michael Tilson Thomas in the 1980s was rewarded with her first GRAMMY". Here she doubles her fun enunciating brother Ira Gershwin's sometimes silly but always ingenious rhymes.

Her favorite "Lover Man" here differs only minimally from her rendition in Sweden.

Ray Noble's "Cherokee", a long-time jam session staple for jazz musicians, is a natural choice for musician Vaughan. It had to be the music. It is doubtful, despite her professed dedication to the words of her songs, that she identified strongly with the "brave Indian warrior" of Noble's lyrics.

"Sometimes I'm Happy", this time in the Netherlands, is looser, seemingly *happier* than the July version.



STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN January 10, 1964

ack in downtown
Stockholm during an
engagement at Restaurant
Berns in the China Varieté
entertainment complex, this
television production drew praise
in the Swedish press, Sarah's
white wardrobe no longer was
a mandate. Johnnie Garry's
stewardship had ended abruptly
in 1960 when Sarah's second
husband [C.B. Atkins] fired all of
us', Garry reports.

Her favorite composers, according to Quincy Jones, were "all the good ones," as in Leonard Bernstein. After seeing West Side Story, she started singing the songs, telling everyone except Bernstein that she wished that he would write an opera for her. So far as is known, no one ever

told Bernstein. She loved Stephen Sondheim's lyrics to "I Feel Pretty". Clearly, here, she feels—and acts—unusually pretty singing them.

During Mack Gordon and Harry Warrens' The More I See You', Sarah shoots a fleeting and rare pantomimed signal to Kirk Stuart. Usually, tempos and dynamics were communicated almost subliminally to her trio. 'She indicated tempo by her body language,' Buster Williams says,' and she would describe a tempo by the way she would move from one note to another. You really had to listen carefully, as well as watch her. If she thought that the tempo was a little too fast, she'd bring it down by the way she would lay back on that note. Listening to her, you always knew what you were supposed to do. This was a serious learning process for me every night.

"She never restricted me," Williams continues. "She didn't want to hear you playing in a restricted manner. She wanted to hear you growing...exploring. She wanted to hear you being daring because she...Sarah, Thelonious Monk, Art Blakey—I heard them all say, You only find something when you make a mistake.' And they said. 'When you make a mistake, then play it again. Then it's correct. And play it loud! Sarah promoted that kind of daring. She wanted you to be free. That's what made the gig enjoyable, knowing that you could explore, knowing if you heard something, do it. If it was a little different, then do it because if you're hearing it as a result of what you're hearing around you, then you're adding color to that picture."

Sarah and Quincy first chose "Baubles, Bangles and Beads", the Robert Wright-George Forrest novelty from Kismet, for their You're Mine You album in 1962. At the time of this filming, she and the Kirk Stuart Trio had just recorded

the number at the Tivoli. It was their fun song. "We played that so many times, and she sang it different every time," Buster relates, listening to this DVD on the telephone. "I have that on my iPod now from our Tivoli recording, and it's different—totally different. Even though our arrangement is basically the same, we played the same arrangement but she sang different notes. Our arrangements were mostly just sketches—here we do this, here we do that, not a note-for-note thing."

Back to Gershwin and a unique quartet of finger-snappers—how better to say "I Gor Rhythm"! Another jazz musicians' anthem and basis for years of improvisation, this number was introduced by Ethel Merman in the 1930 musical Girl Crazy.

"Misty" is serendipitously Sarah's. "Erroll Garner caught me getting on the plane," Quincy Jones relates. "Johnny Burke had just written lyrics to Erroll's 'Misty,' and Erroll said, 'Stick this in your pocket because I like the lyric—Look at me, I'm as happy as a kitten up a tree...' and I just stuck it in my pocket and showed it to Sarah when I got to Paris, and we just did it. She loved it immediately. We both did. That was 1958, and we had the first record on 'Misty.' On the same date, Vaughan And Violins,



Sarah sang my The Midnight Sun Will Never Set. I had written tha with Henri Salvador for the Harry Arnold band in Sweden and [alt saxophonist] Arne Domnérus. Sarah heard it at their Stockholm concert and asked me to get a lyric for her so Dorcas Cochran and I wrote words especially for Sass. We made 'Misty' again with her trio for Sassy Swings The Tivoli at Copenhagen in 1963. I Feel Pretty', 'Lover Man,' Sometimes I'm Happy,' Tenderly,' Honeysuckle Rose' and 'Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home' are on that record, too, so it's great that I can see her sing them all again on her Jazz Icons DVD." Here, Sarah thanks her audience in Swedish for their applause as she approaches "Mistry".

Although Andy Razaf and Thomas "Fats" Waller's "Honeysuckle Rose" reads more like a man's lyric, Sarah projects the familiar number's appeal, offering an abundance of very expressive body language.

With a dramatic drum roll, arco bass, and keyboard flourishes, the Stuart triumvirate introduces a serious production, Sarah's reverent and fervent delivery of Bernstein's story of "Maria", almost as if she is auditioning for that nebulous opera. Of her entire repertoire, "Maria" is the song that Buster Williams most loved hearing her sing. "She took each performance as an individual opportunity for expression," Williams asserted. "Every performance was—this is the

one that counts. 'Maria' was always that one for me."

The finale is a grand celebration. The serious soprano of "Maria" suddenly gets downright raucous, belting our Hughie Cannon's 1902 entreaty "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home". The musicians, and then the audience, reciprocate with joyous abandon as Sarah triumphantly grants repeated encores.

In reminiscing about the many Vaughan-Jones collaborations, Quincy was moved by his memories of their last days: "She did her very last record with me—*Back on the Block*. Chaka Khan

wanted to sing with her, too, Sarah had her arm in a sling. She had melanoma. She said she had to go to the hospital. I said, 'Okay, fine, we're going to do another album.' George Duke and I used to go to the hospital every day with Brazilian songs and act like nothing was wrong. We kept her alive another four months. Psychologically, she was trying, and she was hanging in there. Then one day she said, 'Look, I can sing just as good lying down. I'm gonna go home.' She had three identical Seiko watches, and she gave one to her mother, one to Paris and one to me. I never set the alarm on mine but it kept going off in the middle of the night. And then, about a year or two after she died, the three of us were wearing our watches when we went to pick up the Gershwin Award for her at UCLA. We were standing there together-the three of us-and all three alarms went off at

exactly the same time. It was the weirdest thing I've ever seen in my life. It was like Sarah said. I'm here!"

—Patricia Willard July 2007

Quincy Jonesproduced recording session in the early '60s.

Sarah at a

(Edited by Dorothy Webman and Paris Vaughan Courtnall)

The author gratefully acknowledges the research assistance of (Filmmaker) David G. Berger; Richard Davis; Johnnie Garry; April Greer, Institute of Jazz Studies; Sjef Hoefsmit; Quincy Jones; Holly Maxson; Benny Powell; Göran Wallen and Buster Williams.

Then we released the first Jazz Icons." DVD series in 2006, we didn't know what to expect. Jazz DVDs don't generally sell that well and vintage titles fare even worse. Needless to say, we were overwhelmed by the positive response from critics and consumers alike. Having promised more if the first series did well, we are now honored to present the second series of Jazz Icons." DVDs: Dave Brubeck, John Coltrane, Duke Ellington, Dexter Gordon, Charles Mingus, Wes Montgomery and Sarah Vaughan. These seven new titles are every bit as worthy of inclusion in the elite Jazz Icons." family as the first nine and meet all the criteria of the first series: every artist is a household name that has in some important way helped shape the history of jazz; the concerts capture the artists in their primes during an important and vital period in their careers; we have the full blessing and support of the artists or their estates; and finally, all of the side-musicians are being fairly paid.

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The fact that these DVDs fill such an important void in jazz points out what a debt of gratitude we owe the European TV stations that had the original passion and foresight to film and preserve these full-length concerts. Were it not for them, an important part of American culture and heritage would have been lost forever.

No project of this magnitude can get off the ground without a great team and we're fortunate to have one of the best: Jim Sturgeon at Naxos has become a trusted ally and champion of the entire series; Rick Eisenstein again handled the monumental task of artist and publishing clearances; Steve Scoville again worked his editing magic; our associate producer Don Sickler and consultant Hal Miller each shared their vast wealth of knowledge time and again; and finally, you, the loyal jazz lovers who bought the first series and helped us spread the word. We thank you for allowing us to do this again.

In this day and age, jazz is sadly underappreciated given its tremendous contribution to society. The International Association for Jazz Education is doing much to help remedy this, and we're proud that a percentage of proceeds from each sale of the second series will go to the IAJE's Campaign For Jazz, providing support for student scholarships, jazz advocacy and teacher training.

Our hope is that these DVDs underscore the essential, indisputable qualities that make jazz one of the greatest American art forms. We also hope to see you soon for series three.

David Peck, Phillip Galloway & Tom Gulotta Reelin' In The Years® Productions (July 2007) "This is like the discovery of a bonanza of previously unknown manuscripts of William Shakespeare."

-Nat Hentoff, Wall Street Journal

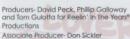
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