




SARAH VAUGHAN
THE GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK





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In 2001, current diva Dianne Reeves recorded 'The Calling: Celebrating Sarah Vaughan', an album paying tribute to her greatest influence. What you have here is the real thing – 47 original recordings, each exhibiting the unique voice that made Vaughan a major force in jazz music in a career that spanned nearly half a century. Her ability to swoop from a high note right down to the depths has been much imitated but never surpassed – something even the talented Ms Reeves would readily admit.

Sarah Lois Vaughan was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1924 and was discovered at the Apollo Theatre when she entered an amateur talent contest. Even in her mid teens Vaughan's amazing, almost operatic vocal range marked her out as something special as she gave her all to 'Body And Soul' and ran out with the modest first prize.

'I did the Amateur Hour just to get the ten dollars,' she later admitted. 'A week at the theatre went with it, but I wasn't even worried about that — I just wanted that ten dollars, because that was a lot of money. I won it, and the week I was there I was on the bill with Ella Fitzgerald. So I said: "Well, my goodness—you can't beat this!" While I was there, Billy Eckstine came to catch the show; he went back and talked to (bandleader) Earl "Fatha" Hines – within a couple of weeks, I was in showbusiness.'

When trumpeter and vocalist Eckstine, who was keen to form his own big band, left Hines's group he persuaded the young Sarah to go with him. She enjoyed her time with Eckstine's orchestra, where she was influenced by the work of trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and saxophonist Charlie Parker, two legendary musicians who had also come over from the Hines band. 'Was I matching up to them? Yes, indeed,' she's remarked, adding: 'If those weren't two good teachers you just couldn't get any!' Vaughan was one of the first vocalists to fully incorporate bop phrasing in her singing, and to have the ability to accomplish this on the level of her instrumental peers. She sang in the church as a child and had also studied piano, these experiences combining to shape the performer she became. Her training as a musician helped her phrase her vocals like an instrument, and when it came to scatting there was no better equipped artist.

A musician's strike kept Sarah Vaughan from recording in the 1943-44 period, but by 1945 her solo career was up and running on the independent Musicraft label, backed by musicians of the calibre of Teddy Wilson, Cecil Payne and Charlie Ventura. She married trumpeter/bandleader George Treadwell, who would become her manager, in 1947. From then until 1952, critics of the influential Downbeat magazine voted her their favourite female singer. Sarah enjoyed not one but two nicknames, both affectionate: 'Sassy' and 'the Divine One'.

She was the first to record the beautiful ballad 'Tenderly' which had been specially written for her label's boss, Albert Marx. These early sessions, featuring material of the quality of 'Body And Soul' and 'Don't Blame Me', brought her to the attention of the giant Columbia label and she was soon on her way to becoming not only a household name but an inspiration to generations of aspiring singers.

A spell on the Mercury label in the 1950s and 1960s further advanced her career, enjoying triumphs with a succession of albums recorded with legendary players like the young Clifford Brown and Freddie Hubbard. Even so, she was less happy with orchestra-backed commercial recordings than playing small-group jazz, to which she returned in the 1970s. She liked to perform live with just a trio of piano, bass and drums, and it was within this more intimate setting that she could really work her magic.

In 1982, Sarah won her first and only Grammy for a live album of Gershwin tunes. But life off stage was fairly eventful and encompassed four marriages: after George Treadwell came American football player Clyde Atkins, restaurateur Marshall Fisher and trumpeter Waymon Reed.

The ability to control her voice almost like an instrument – soft and warm one minute, throaty and passionate the next – helped Sarah Vaughan add an extra dimension to anything she tackled, and her death in 1990 was much mourned.

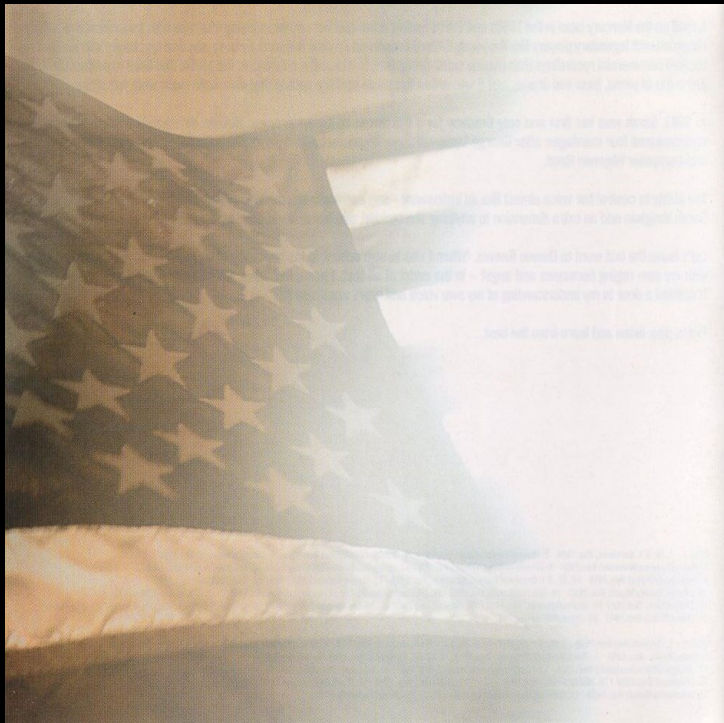
Let's leave the last word to Dianne Reeves. 'When I was in high school, in the beginning of trying to find my own voice, dealing with my own raging hormones and angst – in the midst of all that, I heard her voice. I heard her voice and a light came on. It opened a door to my understanding of my own voice and how I would use it.'

Press play, listen and learn from the best...

Michael Heatley

DISC 1 - 1. (G. & I. Gershwin) Rec.1954 2. (Green/Heyman/Sour) Rec.1954 3. (Van Heusen/Burke) Rec.1954 4. (Hergens/Howard) Rec.1954 5. (Davis/Ramirez/Sherman) Rec.1954 6. (Freed/Arnheim/Lyman) Rec.1954 7. (Ellington/Gordon/Mills) Rec.1954 8. (DeRose/Paris) Rec.1955 9. (Tico/Lenk/Drake) Rec.1955 10. (G. & I. Gershwin/DuBose Heyward) Rec.1955 11. (Lewis/Kenner) Rec.1955 12. (Kalmar/Ruby) Rec.1955 13. (Waller Brooks/Razaf) Rec.1950 14. (Gordon/Revel) Rec.1950 15. (McHugh/Loesser) Rec.1950 16. (Loesser) Rec.1950 17. (Young/Lewis) Rec.1955 18. (Ahler/Turk) Rec.1947 19. (Green/Edwards) Rec.1947 20. (Wildier) Rec.1947 21. (Lane/Adamson) Rec.1949 22. (Porter) Rec.1949 23. (Washington/Young) Rec.1947 24. (Styne/Cahn) Rec.1947 25. (Styne/Cahn) Rec.1947

DISC 2 - 1. (Styne/Cahn) Rec.1955 2. (G. & I. Gershwin) Rec.1950 3. (Rodgers/Hart) Rec.1954 4. (Arlen/Mercer) Rec.1950 5. (Rodgers/Hart) Rec.1954 6. (Adler/Ross) Rec.1955 7. (Bock/Weiss/Holofcener) Rec.1955 8. (G. & I. Gershwin) Rec.1954 9. (Gordon/Revel) Rec.1954 10. (Duke/Harburg) Rec.1954 11. (Rodgers/HammersteinII) Rec.1950 12. (Carmichael/Washington) Rec.1949 13. (Loesser) Rec.1954 14. (Gimbell/Sample) Rec.1954 15. (Bowman) Rec.1950 16. (Wood/Welton) Rec.1954 17. (Wells/Anderson) Rec.1954 18. (Ray/DuPaul) Rec.1954 19. (Webster/Burke) Rec.1955 20. (Lawrence/Cross) Rec.1954 21. (Whiting/Simons/Gillespie) Rec.1952 22. (Ross/Owens) Rec.1952







DISC 1

1. THEY CAN'T TAKE THAT AWAY FROM ME
2. BODY AND SOUL
3. POLKA DOTS AND MOONBEAMS
4. IF I KNEW THEN (WHAT I KNOW NOW)
5. LOVER MAN
6. I CRIED FOR YOU
7. PRELUDE TO A KISS
8. DEEP PURPLE
9. PERDIDO
10. SUMMERTIME
11. JUST FRIENDS
12. THINKING OF YOU
13. AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'
14. GOODNIGHT MY LOVE
15. CAN'T GET OUT OF THIS MOOD
16. I'LL KNOW
17. STREET OF DREAMS
18. I'M GONNA SIT RIGHT DOWN AND WRITE MYSELF A LETTER
19. ONCE IN A WHILE
20. TROUBLE IS A MAN
21. EVERYTHING I HAVE IS YOURS
22. I GET A KICK OUT OF YOU
23. A HUNDRED YEARS FROM TODAY
24. IT'S MAGIC
25. IT'S YOU OR NO ONE

DISC 2

1. GIVE ME A SONG WITH A BEAUTIFUL MELODY
2. NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT
3. MY FUNNY VALENTINE
4. COME RAIN OR COME SHINE
5. IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER
6. WHATEVER LOLA WANTS
7. MR. WONDERFUL
8. EMBRACEABLE YOU
9. YOU HIT THE SPOT
10. APRIL IN PARIS
11. IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING
12. THE NEARNESS OF YOU
13. SPRING WILL BE A LITTLE LATE THIS YEAR
14. COME ALONG WITH ME
15. EAST OF THE SUN
16. MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE
17. SEPTEMBER SONG
18. HE'S MY GUY
19. BLACK COFFEE
20. TENDERLY
21. HONEY
22. LINGER AWHILE

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