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Through My Eyes

Joanna Pascale | Stiletto Records (2008)

By [Greg Camphire](#)

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Philadelphia native Joanna Pascale ably represents her soulful hometown on *Through My Eyes*, demonstrating why she's a favorite of some of the city's finest musicians, including preeminent drummer Mickey Roker—an expert on swing if there ever was one. Pascale has obviously done her homework, and spent some quality time in the woodshed. Sidestepping what could be another tired retread of the Great American Songbook by yet another generic vocalist, Pascale shows she's got the taste and skills to pull off a pleasantly relaxed set of standards.



The vocalist purrs her way through “Wouldn't It Be Lovely” with languid, far-behind-the-beat phrasing, while pianist Andrew Adair serves up the blues flavor to match. Saxophonist Tim Warfield makes an excellent complimentary melodic foil to the bell-like clarity of Pascale's pitch, and the whole band's airy accompaniment expertly cushions the singer's sassy delivery.

Elsewhere, she demonstrates rhythmic authority and playfulness on “Easy to Love,” stretching syllables for dramatic and ear-catching effect. Ballads like “Blue Gardenia” are particularly pleasant, as Pascale invests the lyrics with real warmth and longing melancholy. Her casual, almost blasé delivery of “P.S. I Love You” is reminiscent of Shirley Horn's signature breathy floatation over a molasses-like tempo. And Pascale's ability to tell a story is evident on “Something Wonderful,” where the clarity of the lyrics is put on center stage, with a dramatic intro spotlighting the duo of Pascale and bassist Madison Rast.

Some tunes, such as “The Night Has a Thousand Eyes,” sound perfectly competent yet somewhat drowsy and anonymous beneath an over-polished gloss, requiring something more nakedly emotional. The impression is one of solid craftsmanship, but without the chance-taking (and therefore sometimes pleasingly ragged-sounding) risk and highly personal imprints that are at the heart of great jazz performances.

Nonetheless, the band sounds fresh and well-rehearsed as it stretches the tunes towards the 5-7-minute mark. Whether interpreting a variation on Ahmad Jamal's “Poinciana” beat (“Our Day Will Come”), churning out a Latin groove (“I Hadn't Anyone Till You”), or just digging deep and swinging hard in the pocket

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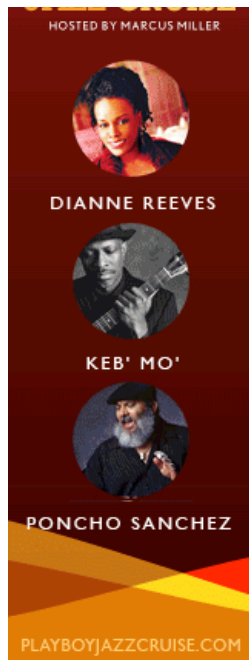
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SHOWCASE SPOTLIGHT

Stevie Holland
New CD: *Before Love Has Gone*



("You Turned the Tables on Me," "When I Grow Too Old to Dream"), it's the group's subtle and seasoned interplay that gives Pascale the backing she needs to do her thing. Special mention also goes to the top-notch recording quality, which is clear, well-rounded and full-bodied.

Pascale appears to be at the start of a journey that is well worth keeping an ear on. In the meantime, she's representing her native City of Brotherly Love with class, grace and swing.

Visit [Joanna Pascale](#) on the web.
[Joanna Pascale at All About Jazz.](#)

Track listing: Wouldn't It Be Lovely; The Night Has a Thousand Eyes; Easy to Love; Blue Gardenia; Our Day Will Come; I Hadn't Anyone Till You; P.S. I Love You; You Turned the Tables on Me; Something Wonderful; When I Grow Too Old to Dream.

Personnel: Joanna Pascale: vocals; Tim Warfield: saxophone; Andrew Adair: piano; Madison Rast: bass; Dan Monaghan: drums.

Style: [Vocal](#) | Published: August 23, 2008



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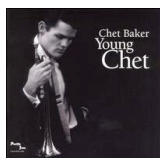
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Greg camphire is a musician/writer born and raised in pittsburgh, PA who currently resides in los angeles, CA for some strange reason. [More about Greg...](#)

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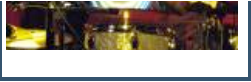


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