



## Joanna Pascale Forbidden Practice

The music of Tin Pan Alley and Broadway served as a backdrop for Joanna Pascale's youth and inform her recent album, *Through My Eyes* (Stiletto). But the Philadelphia singer's embrace of this upbeat material did not come so easily.

Pascale's mother was religious, and forbade her from listening to pop music. A year or so before high school, Pascale began listening to the radio when she could get away with it. She became enamored with a Philadelphia station that spun big band records, and this exposure to Frank Sinatra, Nancy Wilson and Sarah Vaughan provided a gateway to jazz.

Surprisingly, Pascale's mother eventually caught on. Rather than anger, the music evoked nostalgia. The concord was mutually beneficial as Pascale did not find much personal appeal in the mainstream pop singers who emerged in the mid-'90s, anyway.

"It took her back because my grandfather was an amateur singer who died way before I was born. When she saw there was this connection, she just let it happen and allowed me to listen to it," Pascale, 29, said at her home in South Philadelphia. "It's funny because I wasn't allowed to listen to my generation's popular music, but I could listen to Billie Holiday sing 'My Man.'

"Looking back," Pascale continued, "I'm grateful because I immersed myself in the Great American Songbook. The songs are a part of me. It's not like I'm going back and learning this music because it's novel. I'm digging into this music because it's who I am."

While there are rare exceptions—Stevie Wonder's "Happier Than The Morning Sun," Carole King's "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?"—Pascale's muse compels her to delve into the past and unearth obscure repertoire. She largely avoids war horses and the signature songs of other artists. "I'm trying to find these gems that have fallen through the cracks,"



STEVE STOLTZ/FUS

she said. "'What Is This Thing Called Love?' is not a song that I particularly care for."

Pascale earned a bachelor's degree in jazz performance in 2001 at Temple University, where she now teaches. *When Lights Are Low*, Pascale's first album, came out in 2004. *Through My Eyes* not only features the songs she typically performs, but also the band that backs her three times a week at SoleFood, a seafood restaurant at Philadelphia's Loews Hotel. Pascale's hallmarks include an understated vibrato and a knack for beginning phrases at unexpected moments. Her interpretations bear a closer resemblance to instrumentalists than

singers—she almost never plays it straight. The group includes saxophonist Tim Warfield, drummer Dan Monaghan and bassist Madison Rast, who Pascale married in 2005.

While Pascale yearns for more exposure, she expresses satisfaction with her career. She considers herself fortunate to have come of age in Philadelphia. "There were so many great venues that were around where the older musicians would not only play, but just hang out," she said. "You could sit in with these people, but you couldn't just get up and fake it. They would invite you up, and you had to sink or swim."  
—Eric Fine



HIROSHI TAKAOKA

## Adam Rudolph Framing the World

Percussionist Adam Rudolph was an early advocate for fusing jazz and world music, carrying on a tradition of avant-garde multiculturalism forged by Don Cherry. But that attraction to diverse musical traditions was not formed through Rudolph's association with the trumpeter or through his international travels, but by his seemingly more downhome upbringing on Chicago's South Side.

"I heard a lot of great artists who lived in my neighborhood," Rudolph said. "From Howlin' Wolf I learned how musical technique should

serve the expression of deep feeling. From the Art Ensemble of Chicago I learned how important it is to have the courage to pursue the ideas of your own creative imagination. I also learned that if I wanted to have a long relationship with music, I had to learn as much as I could about every phenomenon of music that there is."

Recently, Rudolph has been applying those concepts to several different projects. Hu Vibrational is a percussion group with Hamid Drake, Brahim Fribgane and Carlos Niño; the Go: Organic Orchestra is an open-ended large