



# DL MEDIA MUSIC

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**Vocalist Joanna Pascale Embraces  
Deep Emotional Connections with Lesser Known  
Repertoire on *Wildflower* - Available May 5**

**Produced by Pianist Orrin Evans and Featuring  
Christian McBride, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Gregoire Maret,  
Bilal, Cyrus Chestnut and more**



*"Joanna Pascale isn't the sort of jazz vocalist who draws attention to herself at the expense of a lyric.....she also doesn't settle for songs whose words don't deserve the attention." - Washington Post*

*"Stunning, sophisticated and extremely soulful" - Philadelphia Weekly*

### [Stream Tracks from \*Wildflower\*](#)

"Wildflowers grow under the most unlikely circumstances," says vocalist **Joanna Pascale**. "You find them in the most unlikely places. From the beginning, that's how my journey has been."

Whether referring to the lesser-known repertoire to which she's drawn or to the singer herself, nurtured in the concrete jungle of her native Philadelphia, ***Wildflower*** is the ideal title for Pascale's captivating new album. Supported by an excellent band led by the session's producer, pianist **Orrin Evans**, and a host of special guests including **Christian McBride**, **Kurt Rosenwinkel**, **Gregoire Maret**, **Bilal**, and **Cyrus Chestnut**, Pascale finally comes into full bloom, a wildflower whose beauty is emerging into the sunlight.

The recording of *Wildflower* coincided with the end of Pascale's decade-long engagement at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel, which allowed her to hone her voice, style, and vast repertoire. But leaving that long-running engagement also provided a newfound freedom to follow a more personal path, which she embraces on her fourth album. Each song on *Wildflower* is one with which Pascale feels a deep emotional connection, which shines through in the passionate feeling she conveys to the listener. "If I don't connect with a lyric, I can't sing a song," she says. "I love to dig into the lyrics and find all the different shades, the stories within the story, and then try to interpret that."

But equally important for her approach to breathing life into this material is Pascale's interaction with her musicians. "For me," she says, "it's the space between the words that tells the story. I love that these musicians allowed so much space for me to paint these pictures. It allowed me to get very intimate with the phrasing of the lyrics. The fun in storytelling is finding a way of phrasing so that the listener connects to your intention and all the ways you feel the subtle shades of the emotions in the story."

Propelled by the deep, sinuous groove laid down by Evans, McBride, and drummer **Donald Edwards**, "Forget Me" immediately establishes that connection via Pascale's intimate, impassioned delivery. It's followed by the tender J.J. Johnson ballad "Lament," featuring an original lyric penned for Pascale by **Tony Haywood**, which features Edwards and bassist **Luques Curtis**. Most of the album features bassist **Vicente Archer** and drummer **Obed Calvaire**, who luxuriate in creating space while maintaining momentum on tracks like "I Remember You" and "Stay With Me."



*Photo Credit: Whitney Thomas*

To find the ideal musicians to realize her vision for the album, Pascale worked closely with producer Orrin Evans. The two go back almost twenty years together, to her near-disastrous first experience on stage when she was 14-years-old at an Evans-led jam session. When the pianist finally called her to the stage, he waved off her offer of a songbook with the music for Billie Holiday's "Good Morning Heartache."

"This was honestly the first time I'd ever sang when I wasn't singing along to a record," Pascale recalls. "Orrin starts playing and something wasn't right. I start singing and he's in a different key, and I'm horrified. So I turn around and the bassist and drummer are laughing hysterically to the point where tears were rolling down their faces and their shoulders were shaking trying to hold it in. Next thing I know, somebody grabs the songbook and puts it in front of Orrin. I still have a little bit of fear whenever I sit in on a jam session."

Despite that shaky start, Pascale and Evans forged an ongoing friendship, to the point where they consider themselves virtually family. "Joanna's like a little sister to me," Evans has said. "I think we really see time and

space and rhythm in the same way. So whatever we do, there's going to be space for us to grow and make something happen."

As a producer, Pascale says, Evans "knew exactly what I wanted to get to and I really trusted that. There were times where it was hard for me to give up control, because I had total control of all the other records that I've done. But he really had the wider vision than I did at the moment, which helped to shape everything. We have a lot of mutual respect."

Gregoire Maret's expressive harmonica highlights two rare excursions into the pop songbook for Pascale, Stevie Wonder's "Overjoyed" and the Gerry Goffin/Carole King favorite "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?" Maret also appears, along with Cyrus Chestnut's spirited organ, on Pascale's achingly slow rendition of Henry Glover's "Drown in My Own Tears," best known from Ray Charles' recording.

The title song, meanwhile, features two of Philadelphia's favorite six-string sons, Kurt Rosenwinkel and **Tim Motzer**, and vocals by neo-soul singer Bilal, Pascale's friend from Philly's renowned High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA), which also boasts Rosenwinkel, McBride, Joey DeFrancesco, and members of The Roots as graduates. "We started discovering music together," Pascale recalls of Bilal. "We would make each other jazz

vocal mix-tapes and trade them. So it was a very special, very magical moment for me to have him share his gift on the recording twenty years later."

After graduating from CAPA, Pascale attended Temple University, where she is now a member of the faculty and has been featured on two of the university's releases, including the Temple University Jazz Band's Thad Jones tribute album, *To Thad With Love*. She is featured on Warfield's *Jazzy Christmas* album; Orrin Evans' *Liberation Blues*, recorded live at Smoke; on Philly sax legend Larry McKenna's *From All Sides*; and on *That Music Always Round Me*, a setting of Walt Whitman's poetry by Garry Dial and Dick Oatts. She made her leader debut with 2004's *When Lights Are Low*, followed by the 2008 release *Through My Eyes* and a 2010 duo recording with pianist Anthony Wonsey that focused on Songbook standards.



Joanna Pascale - *Wildflower* EPK

**Joanna Pascale · *Wildflower***

Release Date: **May 5, 2015**

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