

**PRESS RELEASE:**

***VOCALIST JENNIFER LEE RELEASES NEW ALBUM  
WITH TOP WEST COAST JAZZ MUSICIANS.***

**Quiet Joy Released May 18, 2009**

“What grabs you about Jennifer Lee’s artistic approach is her self-assured genuineness...And in a female jazz vocalist in a field packed with talent, Ms. Lee is the real thing.”

*Dan McClenaghan, All About Jazz*

“Lee has an inviting alto tone, with little trace of vibrato, and she phrases with consummate subtlety, a welcome throwback to a school of singers such as June Christy and Chris Connor who were once associated with Stan Kenton’s brassy southern California big band...”

*Lee Hildebrand, San Francisco Bay Guardian*

There are flocks of jazz singers active in North America and elsewhere, but only a rare few possess the artistic gift enabling them to go beyond matter-of-fact entertainment and make the listener feel a mind and a heart at work. San Francisco Bay Area resident Jennifer Lee is such a singer, and proof positive comes with the 13 songs of her new album, *Quiet Joy*, set for release on May 18, 2009, courtesy of SBE Records.

Lee, who not only sings but also composes and plays guitar and piano, is accompanied on the album by well-respected Bay Area and San Diego jazz players on the top of their game. Guitarist Peter Sprague, pianist David Udolf, string bassists Bob Magnusson and Buca Necak, percussionist Raul Ramirez, and drummer Duncan Moore. On four tracks, saxophonist-harmonica player Tripp Sprague plays and, on one, cellist Carter Dewberry. Bob Magnussen and the Sprague brothers are holdovers from Lee’s first album, *Jaywalkin’*.

*Quiet Joy*, a carefully assembled program of standards, Brazilian classics, and original compositions, is dedicated to the memory of Lee’s friend Sandra Conde. On this recording, Lee’s voice suggests both the confidence of accrued experience and the spry step of freshness. Her perfect delivery of lyrics in English, in Portuguese, and in jazz’s scat language, comes with an elemental of vitality as well as an element of compassion. Lee has a special awareness of melody, and her imaginative depth seems bottomless.

“Making music is a portal into a different state of consciousness for me,” reveals Jennifer. “I’m blessed to have a life of sharing music—through my performing, through my recordings, and through my teaching. Making music is joyful for me, and, through my

# jennifer lee

vocalist pianist guitarist

music, I hope to make that joyfulness accessible to others.”

True words. Jennifer’s three compositions are heartfelt invitations to lucky listeners to share her state of consciousness. She renders the finger-snapping, straight-ahead jazz tune “Music of Your Soul” with a jaunty sauciness that finds emotional agreement in solos by Necak, Sprague, and Udolf. For her up-tempo “You Knew,” Jennifer “lets a song out of her heart” in celebration of an unspoken connection; the infectious vibe of her lyrics is extended compellingly by soloing saxophonist Tripp Sprague and by the ever-alert rhythm section. A third original, “Quiet Joy,” inspired by her new 7-string guitar and the heavenly rustic Mendocino County town called Elk, finds her scating a high-gliding melody as her colleagues fondly point southward to Rio de Janeiro with a percolating dance rhythm.

Brazilian music’s singular blend of joy and wistfulness speaks to Jennifer, sprung from childhood encounters with her parents’ bossa nova 4-track tapes and records. She tenderly illuminates Renato Motha’s “Menina Da Lua,” the haunting beauty of her vocal and guitar playing joining the cello of Carter Dewberry in heightening atmosphere. This song, not incidentally, was a favorite of Jennifer’s late grandmother, Lucy Lee, to whom the song is lovingly dedicated. Jennifer sings a gorgeous rendition of the bossa nova “O Barquinho” with emotion every bit as believable as that from a Joao Gilberto or Elis Regina. Jennifer’s gift for exalted melody propels the Gilberto-identified “O Pato,” and her treatment of “Menininha do Portao,” associated with singer Maria Rita, shines thanks to her clear and winning diction of Portuguese lyrics about love. The medley of the Gilberto favorite “Amor Certo” and the Gershwins’ “S’Wonderful” is magical for her fine combination of tone and phrasing. The easy directness of her singing perfectly complements the pulse supplied by guitars, bass, and percussion. For certain, the band shares her natural affinity for Latin music.

Jennifer’s skill at communicating the expressive qualities of a song is just as impressive on selections from the Great American Songbook. Supported by Tripp Sprague’s expertly played harmonica, she locates the sweetness in the Disney song “Baby Mine” without showing the least bit of sticky sentiment. She notes, “As I sing it, I am both mother and child. It touches on my most passionate feelings as a nurturer and on my ardent longing for nurturing.” “I Hear Music,” a staple of her concert repertory, has Jennifer in a declaratory, swinging mode that is echoed in solos from Peter Srague and pianist David Udolf.

Just as much a treat is the soul-lifting revival of “Pennies from Heaven” and the shimmering balladic joining of Broadway gem “On a Clear Day” and the classic “Never Never Land.” Both of these cuts feature Jennifer’s sweet, soulful piano playing as well as her warm and expressive vocals. Jennifer’s exquisite singing erects a cathedral of the spirit on “I Don’t Want To Fall,” this number is one of eight numbers exhibiting Jennifer’s grace and facility on guitar. All the album tracks lend credence to her aesthetic: “Positive music is what I want to put out there – music that’s about beauty, joy, peace love, and presence.”

Leader of a jazz quartet that includes three of her Quiet Joy cohorts (Udolf, Necak and Ramirez), and of “Doce Brazil” (her trio featuring Argentinean guitarist Hugo Wainzinger and Brazilian percussionist Claudio Bebianno), Jennifer Lee is no stranger to discerning jazz fans in the Bay Area.

# jennifer lee

vocalist • pianist • guitarist

She first recorded as one of five talented Bay Area singers showcased on the 2001 CD compilation, Quint-Essential. Her initial feature album, Jaywalkin', with Peter Sprague on guitar and Bob Magnussen on bass, appeared in 2003 to widespread critical acclaim. Among the media outlets smitten with her dulcet voice on Jaywalkin' were All About Jazz ("the finest debut of the year"), Skyjazz, Jazzreview.com, JazzWest, and Jazz Perceptives ("A delicious listening experience."). When not performing, Jennifer is a highly regarded piano teacher.

San Diego's Peter Sprague is a bandleader in his own right, and, as a sideman, he has worked with, to name just a few, Chick Corea, Hubert Laws, and Dianne Reeves. David Udolf, based in San Francisco, leads his own trio and has backed Mary Stallings, Herb Geller, and other worthies. Bob Magnusson is among the most respected bass players in jazz America, having shared concert stages or recording studio space with the likes of Sarah Vaughan, Hank Jones, Art Pepper, and Bud Shank. Since leaving Belgrade for the United States years ago, Buca Nacak has served luminaries such as Clark Terry and Chet Baker. Peru-born Raul Ramirez is a first-call percussionist in the Bay Area. Duncan Moore, based in San Diego, has spent quality time with numerous jazz dignitaries, including Kenny Burrell, Houston Person, Curtis Fuller, and Ray Brown. Tripp Sprague works regularly with musicians of various genres, like pop-r&b's Temptations and blues-jazz bard Mose Allison. Southern California cellist Carter Dewberry stays busy performing with, among more, the Peter Sprague String Consort and the Definiens Project.

*Contact: Ann Braithwaite (781) 259-9600*

*Ann@bkmusicpr.com*