

JAZZ/FOLK SINGER SARAH TOLAR RELEASES HER NEW RECORDING, SOMETHING SARAH

A jazz singer-songwriter with a beautiful voice and a talent for writing memorable songs, Sarah Tolar is releasing her third album, *Something Sarah*.

Sarah remembers how the project originated: “I had just moved to Tucson, Arizona after many years living in Brooklyn. I was hired to sing with the band at a local restaurant. Bob Lambert came to hear me perform and on a break he asked if I could sing the standard ‘You’ve Changed.’” He enjoyed her version so much that he immediately told Sarah that they needed to make a record together. Lambert had worked with producer Jeffrey Wood in the past and his enthusiasm along with the singer’s obvious musical talents resulted in the three collaborating on *Something Sarah*.

For the recording, drummer Bill Campbell (who has worked with Kurt Rosenwinkel and Snarky Puppy) flew in from New York. He had played on Sarah’s first two records (producing and co-writing the music for *Vision*) and was the singer’s long-time friend. “I was very fortunate to also get pianist Angelo Versace, a phenomenal musician who is the director of the Jazz Studies program at the University of Arizona, and bassist Thoger Lund. Thoger, who is originally from Denmark, has been part of the Tucson music scene for two decades. These musicians form my dream band.” Some of the selections also include fine contributions from trumpeter Eric Jacobson, Ben Goldberg on bass clarinet, violinist Lila Sklar, accordionist Dan Cantrell, Greg Sankovich on organ and keyboards, and Michael Papenburg doubling on guitar and steel guitar.

The singer describes the performances on *Something Sarah* as “a modern take on jazz singer songwriter music that focuses on storytelling. I wanted to perform folk songs with strong stories that can also fit into the jazz genre, interesting pieces that not everybody knows.” She introduces three of her originals (“At The End Of The Day,” “Be Good To Me” and “Finding My Way”) and also uplifts songs that originated from a wide variety of sources.

Something Sarah is a very cinematic record that includes a lot of different textures and colors, with the instrumentalists’ contributions adding color and a solid foundation for Sarah’s story-telling. “River,” a slow burn with a lot of intensity, is given a dramatic treatment. It tells the tale of a strong woman who has been through a lot and survived. “At The End Of The Day,” which is about how challenging relationships can be, includes colorful interplay between trumpet and piano. Drake’s “Way To Blue” is one of several songs about finding

one's way in life. The soulful ballad "Be Good To Me," a wistful and dreamlike version of the June Christy hit "Something Cool," and "Lovesong" (featuring bluesy and fetching singing) are followed by "1917," a profound narrative about war. The English folk song "Who Wants The Evening Rose" has impressive violin and piano solos along with the feel of an ECM recording. The folkish "Finding My Way" and a quietly expressive version of "You've Changed" conclude the program. The bonus cut for the CD version of Something Sarah also includes Randy Newman's "Louisiana 1927," a classic about the challenges and issues facing marginalized people in the U.S.

Something Sarah is the latest accomplishment in Sarah Tolar's busy life. She was born in Greely, Colorado and at ten moved with her family to Valencia, California. Her parents were professional musicians who had a duo act and, as a child, Sarah sometimes performed with them. After high school, she toured with a musical show for a year. "Going out on tour is when I really became interested in jazz, hearing Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Diana Krall when I was 19." At the University Of North Texas she earned her Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in Jazz Studies while also gigging with her jazz quartet in Dallas and Ft. Worth.

After college Sarah moved to New York City where she performed as a jazz singer-songwriter in clubs. Within six months she was working for a private entertainment company as a live music producer, arranging for large ensembles. She directed a 15-piece band and had the opportunity to work with James Taylor, Jon Bon Jovi, Billy Joel and many other top names. Sarah toured with the electro-funk group Chromeo, sang on Broadway and television, performed her original music in Europe, China and Canada, and taught at the School of Music at the 92nd street Y in New York City. Her first two albums, Big Blue Moon (which features her original jazz-folk compositions) and Vision (a collaboration with Bill Campbell), were both very successful.

After many years based in Brooklyn, Sarah Tolar is enthusiastic about living in Tucson and the release of Something Sarah. "Performing in Tucson has been a tremendous gift for me, being part of a smaller city that is culturally vibrant and so supportive of live music." She looks forward to performing the music of Something Sarah for live audiences. "I'm really excited for people to hear this music. I feel that the melding of different genres results in a sonic experience that a lot of different kinds of people can enjoy."