

# Anita Wardell

## Profile

Anita Wardell's singing is exciting and breathtaking. She is noted for her mesmerizing and captivating vocal improvisations and vocalese lyrics to instrumental solos.

Anita is a musician who uses the voice as her instrument, displaying precision and agility, mixed with heartfelt emotion.

"Kinda Blue", her second and most recent album for Proper Records UK, shows Anita's versatility and complete command of her instrument. On this recording, she has teamed up with some of the UK's finest musicians: Robin Aspland (piano), Jeremy Brown (bass), and Steve Brown (drums), with special guest performances by Tristan Maillot on drums, Adam Glasser on harmonica and Phil Robson on guitar. This carefully selected set of songs gives you an insight to the infectious and spellbinding performances heard live.

Anita received the prestigious BBC Jazz Award for Best of Jazz category in 2006 . This coupled with the release of *Kinda Blue* are now propelling Anita into the major artist arena.

Noted, her first release for the new label (released in July 2006), is a collection of well known material from the Blue Note era to which Anita has penned many of her own lyrics. It received much radio play and 4 and 5 star reviews from UK and European jazz publications.

## **Anita Wardell**

Singer Norma Winstone praised her "unexpected vulnerability, which makes her reading of the ballads both beautiful and touching. Her honesty shines in this well-chosen collection of songs."

Bebop pioneer Mark Murphy proclaimed Anita, "a gift from Australia", adding "what hits me, is how expressive her ballad singing is. Then she has the courage to scat a ballad or two, not unlike a young lady disciple of the Ben Webster school."

### **Early Biography**

Born in Guildford, UK, Anita moved to Australia with her family as a child. Anita's formative years were spent soaking up the Rodgers and Hammerstein and Cole Porter classics. She also explored her father's collection of big band albums by Duke Ellington, Count Basie and many more. During her teens, she started to get to grips with the complexities of modern Jazz when she discovered Clifford Brown, Cannonball Adderley, Miles Davis and Charlie Parker. At the same time she learned her vocal craft from greats like Ella Fitzgerald, Mark Murphy, Carmen McRae, Betty Carter, Jon Hendricks and Eddie Jefferson.

After attending secondary School she completed her degree in Music at the Adelaide University. In 1990, Anita relocated back to the UK where she studied at the Guildhall school of music and drama.

### **Recording information**

Anita's recording career began in 1995 with her CD, Why do you Cry? Featuring pianist Liam Noble.

In 1998 she released Straight Ahead with international star pianist Jason Rebello. Japan's most popular jazz publication, Swing Journal, gave its endorsement, writing, "she's the real thing who can fluently scat and vocalese!"

## **Anita Wardell**

Her longstanding musical relationship with pianist Robin Aspland started with the release of "Until the stars fade" in 2001 also featuring the exciting US drummer Gene Calderazzo and Jeremy Brown on bass. At this point Jazzwise Magazine called her "energetic and inventive" while The Guardian proclaimed her "a model of the Jazz singer's art, highlighting her clarity, improvisational skills and emotional resonance.

In 2004 she teamed up with Tenor Saxophonist Benn Clatworthy and recorded "If You Never Come to Me".

Anita was signed to Proper Records in 2006 and recorded her first album for them "Noted"

"Kinda Blue" Proper records 2007 and released in March 2008.

Anita has guested on many local and international recordings.

A new recording is scheduled for release in 2010