



Mary Ann Lacey's Quintet plays cool jazz

Description

Jazz classics of the 30s, 40s and 50s featured at recent concert at L'escalier

By **Byron Toben**

I am known for not being a fan of Metal, Grunge, Punk and other spin offs of good solid rock, so what a pleasure to hear **Mary Ann Lacey** voice jazz classics of the 30s, 40s and 50s recently. More so because her quintet features the instruments more favoured by the above spin offs – heavy guitar, bass and drum. Trumpeter **Paul Serralheiro** (who has oft accompanied her on guitar in duo appearances) adds some nice wind instrument flourishes. As Duke Ellington has often been quoted, “If it don’t swing, it don’t mean a thing”.

The recent one night show was at the intimate second floor veggie bar L'Escallier.

Ms. Lacey, who professionally is a Speech-Language Pathologist, has also sung at Westmount Park's summer outdoor lagoon series and taught tango dancing at Westmount's Victoria Hall. She can sing in French and Spanish and even handles a Yiddish refrain in a neat *Bei Mir, Bist Du Schoen*. She has also written on jazz for several websites, including this one.

... what a pleasure to hear Mary Ann Lacey voice jazz classics of the 30s, 40s and 50s... In all, 17 songs were featured from Ms. Lacey's vast repertoire.

The recent recital opened with Irving Berlin's 1935 classic, *Dancing Cheek to Cheek*. Later in the evening, she added his 1932 *How Deep is the Ocean, How High is the Sky*... Hey, I know the scientific answer to that one... see the end of this review. Cole Porter who, together with Berlin, was the only major composer to not have used a collaborator for his lyrics, got his due with his 1930 *Love For Sale*.



The oldest selection was Jerome Kern's 1920 *Look For The Silver Lining*, which had some listeners snapping fingers, while the newest was a zippy 1963 *Better Than Anything* by David 'Buck' Wheat and Bill Loughborough.

In between, I enjoyed the 1948 classic by Nat 'King' Cole, *Nature Boy*, composed around lyrics by the boy himself, vegetarian, bearded, sandaled (and lower cased) eden ahbez.

French composer Charles Trenet's 1942 *Que reste-t-il-de nos amours?* was a delight (known in English as *I Wish You Love*).

In all, 17 songs were featured from Ms. Lacey's vast repertoire.

Joining Mr Serralheiro in the band were guitarist **Richard Nolet**, drummer **Francis LaLiberté** and bassist **Andre Asselin**, fine experienced musicians all.

Whoops almost forgot the depths and heights...

How deep the Ocean?

6.831 miles (10.994 kilometres) being the lowest part of the Marianna Trench (about 200 miles SW of Guam)

How high the Sky?



7.4564 miles (12 kilometres)

This was a tough one as it depends on the definition of the sky. The earth's atmosphere is covered by various uneven layers of gases, being from the closest out, the Troposphere, Stratosphere, Mesosphere, Thermosphere and Exosphere before fading into the vacuum of outer space. Most gaseous matter (90%) is in the first layer. Further, most commercial flights fly in the upper reaches of that layer, being 9 to 12 kilometres above Earth, so I have chosen that outer limit.

Channelling Mr Berlin, he explained, "It's not the numbers, it's the feeling". I agree.

Ms Lacey's next appearance at L'Escalier is **Wednesday, May 16** at 7 pm.

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Images: courtesy of Mary Ann Lacey

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Byron Toben is the immediate past-president of the Montreal Press Club.



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