

THE LOUISVILLE JAZZ SOCIETY PRESENTS

THE KARAN CHAVIS GROUP

THE CAFE

LOUISVILLE

MARCH 24, 2024

Vocalist Karan Chavis is truly one of the hidden gems on the Louisville jazz scene. Tonight she'll swing and serenade her way through an intimate evening of jazz and blues.

During her career now spanning several decades, Karan has sung with such jazz and blues greats as B.B. King, Bo Diddley, the Neville Brothers, Kirk Whalum, Carmen Bradford, and the Duke Ellington Orchestra led by Mercer Ellington, across the United States and in Japan and Mexico.

Karan is joined tonight by a rhythm section of Louisville pros who also play in a variety of groups around town. They'll play a number of tunes from *The Great American Songbook* by Rodgers and Hart, the Gershwin Brothers, Hoagy Carmichael, George Shearing, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Billy Strayhorn, along with a few other tunes.

Pianist Wade Honey, a native of South Dakota, moved here to attend UofL – and play jazz - in 2000. He plays most weekends at French Lick, and with saxophonist Jamey Aebersold's quartet. He also teaches at the Kentucky School for the Blind as well as private students.

Bassist Dave Neill can be heard around town and the region playing in jazz and rock bands, in musical theatre and with *Small Time Napoleon*, a group which plays "a mad science blend of western swing, hot jazz and folk", according to *Insider Louisville*.

Drummer Zack Kennedy plays in Louisville and around the region in *Small Time Napoleon*, *Squeeze-Bot*, the *Hot Sauce Brass Band*, *Ida Lupino* and *The Drew Miller Trio*.

THE TUNES

The group will play the following tunes, and perhaps a couple others, as the evening progresses

On the Sunny Side of the Street

Jimmy McHugh and Dorothy Fields 1930

Louis Armstrong liked this tune well enough to devote both sides of a 78 in order to present his arrangement in 1934. Other notable recordings are Dizzy Gillespie's with Sonny Rollins and Sonny Stitt and much more recently a zydeco version by Cyndi Lauper.

That Old Black Magic

Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer 1942

While originally sung by Johnny Johnston in the movie *Star Spangled Rhythm*, Mercer had written the lyrics with Judy Garland in mind, and she released a single a month after the movie came out. It's since been sung by everyone from Frank Sinatra to Bob Dylan to Marilyn Monroe in *Bus Stop*.

C'est Si Bon

Henri Betti, Andre Hornez and Jerry Seelen 1947

The first nine notes of this tune came into composer Betti's mind in front of a *Scandale* lingerie shop

in Nice, and he then composed the melody in 10 minutes. Louis Armstrong fell in love with it at a jam session in Nice and recorded a hit version in with English lyrics by Seelen.

Skylark

Hoagy Carmichael and Johnny Mercer 1941

Originally written for an unrealized musical about jazz trumpeter Bix Beiderbeck, this song sounds like a solo in a jazz ballad, and Mercer's lyrics aptly match the complex melodies. Stan Getz did a nice instrumental version, and Cassandra Wilson's 1995 vocal version is lovely.

Lullaby of Birdland

George Shearing and George David Weiss 1952

Shearing composed this tune in 10 minutes. It became the theme song for the New York nightclub *Birdland*, and was played regularly on a radio program promoting the club (and indirectly Shearing).

Lemon Drop

George Wallington 1949

Both Woody Herman and Ella Fitzgerald recorded this bebop tune at a blistering pace. Let's see how Karan treats it tonight.

East of the Sun

Brooks Bowman 1934

Bowman, a Princeton student, wrote this tune for a student play. It was quickly picked up by a number of artists and became a hit the following year. Bowman died in a car crash in 1937.

The Girl from Ipanema

Antonio Carlos Jobim, Vinicius de Moraes, Norman Gimbel 1962

The great Brazilian composer Jobim was inspired to write this tune while watching a very attractive young lady who regularly strolled by a bar he frequented. It is perhaps his biggest hit.

Lush Life

Billy Strayhorn 1933-36

Strayhorn wrote this tune, sophisticated both musically and in its world-weary subject, while still a teenager, and his use of the "gay" in the lyrics may reflect the fact that he would soon be one of the first jazz musicians to come out of the closet. The John Coltrane-Johnny Hartman version is a gem.

Love Is Here to Stay

George and Ira Gershwin 1938

While written for the Goldwyn Follies, this song became a hit when Gene Kelly sang it in *An American in Paris*. More recently, Harry Connick Jr. Sang it in *When Harry Met Sally*.

My Funny Valentine

Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart 1937

This ballad debuted in Rodgers and Hart's musical *Babes in Arms*. Trumpeter and singer Chet Baker recorded it many times starting in 1952, and fellow trumpeter Miles Davis soon followed with several recordings. Overall, it's been recorded over 1300 times by 600 musicians.

Mack the Knife

Kurt Weill 1931

Bobby Darin, Ella Fitzgerald and Louie Armstrong all had hits with this song about a serial murderer in the London underground, from the Bertold Brecht musical *The Threepenny Opera*.

Sources: *The Jazz Standards* by Ted Gioia, 2012; *Wikipedia*

Thanks for coming out tonight, folks. See you again April 28 for the Andy Oberhausen quartet.