



HEATHER FERGUSON

(March 28, 2023 – Full Bio)

Of her debut album, *Lush Life*, “This is a very accomplished and warmly recommended debut album by a singer whose reputation must surely spread internationally, said Bruce Crowther, UK Jazz Journal reviewer and author of “*Singing Jazz: The Singers and their Styles*”.

“...the performance throughout the album is marvellously clean and the music itself can only be called luminous.” said Jean Keith Fagon, The Jazz Project, Hill Rag, Washington D.C.

“You can hear it in her beautiful phrasing and in her engaging, confident, generous, insightful and passionate performance”, said Sharna Searle in Toronto’s, The Whole Note

Heather’s journey to music was winding but the singer, based in Victoria, Canada, is becoming known for her interpretations of great 20th century songs. Her debut album, *Lush Life*, shows her remarkable phrasing and vocal control and released in November 2022. In it, she pays homage to great songs that still resonate with audiences’ decades after they hit the charts.

Over her life Heather’s powerful voice was always there in choirs as well as voice training in university but her love of music took a backseat to a career in non-profit until she met jazz singer [Trudy Desmond](#) in the nineties. Watching Trudy sing, jazz felt natural and fun, and Heather held onto that feeling until she could sing again. Even so, it wasn’t until she took courses at [Big Voice Studio](#) in 2010 with internationally acclaimed voice coach Elaine Overholt, that the floodgates of possibility opened.

Later that year, a family move took Ferguson from Toronto to a new home in Victoria, Canada. She immediately joined the Board of Directors for [The Victoria Conservatory of Music](#) and was one of the first to enroll in jazz vocals at the VCM’s newly opened Chywll Contemporary School. After that it was just layers and layers of music for years after. During that time she

found like-minded musicians who wanted to start a band so she cornered the great bassist [Joey Smith](#) at a gig one night to ask him to coach. Originally from Tennessee, Smith arranged the music and toured with the [Glenn Miller Orchestra](#), and has played with legends [Charlie Byrd](#), [Herb Ellis](#) and [Cleo Laine](#).

Under Joey Smith's mentorship Heather eventually graduated to solo shows at Victoria's storied [Hermann's Jazz Club](#) and then to recording, with the release of singles on various streaming services with producer Wynn Gogol at 1 Ton Studio.

Her debut album *Lush Life* is a collection of great 20th century songs that she loves to sing for herself and wanted to share with her growing number of fans. The new album features veteran multi-instrumentalists Dr. Tony Genge (Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis, Paul Horn, John Abercrombie, Randy Brecker, Roberta Gamberini, P.J. Perry), **Joey Smith** (Glenn Miller Orchestra, Cleo Laine, Herb Ellis, Rosemary Clooney), **Miguelito Valdes** (Omara Portuondo, Afro-Cuban All-Stars, Alex Cuba) and **Barrie Sorensen** (Sarah McLachlan, The Paperboys, Jets Overhead) with **Damian Graham** (Michael Kaeshammer, Jane Bunnet, Holly Cole, The Shuffle Demons, Buddy Guy) on drums. Well-known artists **Jan Stirling** (Patty and Oliver Gannon, Ross Taggart) and **Kelby MacNayr** (Phil Dwyer, Neil Swainson, Miles Black, John Clayton) round out the instrumentalists on the 10 tracks.

Throughout the 10 tracks in the album, Ferguson unleashes the powerful vocal control that brings emotion and storytelling to every song. The title track, written in the 1930's by Billy Strayhorn, resonated with her from the first moment she heard it over thirty years ago. Heather's take features Miguelito Valdes on flugelhorn and congas, Tony Genge on a 1960 Hammond organ that has a 1955 Lesley Cabinet attached, and Joey Smith's 1955 Gibson Guitar (bought for \$500 many years ago) providing a metallic, somewhat retro sound.

A dynamic and consummate performer with a smouldering sound and soulful crooning, Ferguson's music can be found on streaming platforms including Spotify, YouTube and Apple and on many curated playlists. Visit heatherferguson.ca to sign up for the mailing list and join a growing circle of fans.

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