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Lua Hadar's Jazz Without Borders

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Warm Smiles and Warmer Sounds

Singing sexy Italian ballads, funk a la Francaise and the Great American Songbook, Lua Hadar fit right into the North Beach atmosphere at Jazz at Pearls last Thursday accompanied by the Jason Martineau Quartet, a top notch group of Bay Area musicians that includes the very able Jason Martineau on piano, Mario Suracci on bass, a very smooth Tony Malfatti on reeds — all three equally fine — and a subtle Randy Odell on drums. And talk about performer generosity! Lua has it in spades.s.

As an experienced crooner, Lua Hadar commands the stage and sings on key. Blending well with her back-up, her mix of songs — “crossover” she calls it —shows off her range from playful up-tempo selections to glamorous slower ballads. In the early set, the faster numbers definitely won the attention of the audience. With “Quando Quando Quando” (Tell Me When), a double-time samba, Ms. Hadar modulated effortlessly from one key to the next higher and was having such a good time, her smile and upbeat mood became infectious. Continuing in perfect Italian (she spent five years in Italy leading the life of an itinerant actor), her next ballad was the lovely “Qualche Parte del Mondo” (Somewhere in the World) taking us to dreamy Mediter-ranean beaches under canopies of trees.

To “Young and Foolish” from the Hague/ Horwitt show Plain and Fancy she recently performed so well with 42nd Street Moon, Lua added a bossa nova beat which didn't have as much center as her other numbers. She quickly redeemed herself with a new ballad from Candace Forest's recent chamber musical Viva Concha called “Your Face Flew by my Window” which tells how we can lose the ones we love making mistakes at all ages. In “Soon” from the brothers Gershwin show Strike up the Band, Lua's bright colors shone.

The show stopper of the evening, again in Italian, was “Una Notte a Napoli” (One Night in Naples), with its definite rumba beat. In Helen Deutsch's jazz waltz “Hi Lili Hi Lo,” Lua's subtler warm tones came out and her rendition of “Estate” (Summer) captured the sultry warmth of the summer night it spoke of. “Nature Boy” was made famous by Nat King Cole and is said to have been inspired by a Yiddish song. In 1948 Nat King Cole's version was a #1 hit for eight weeks. “The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return.” Sounds like a lesson worth learning. We finally got a taste of Randy Odell's expertise on Drums in his only drum solo of the evening in a very haunting intro to Lua's “Nature Boy.”



Keep an eye and ear out for Lua Hadar! Balancing her repertoire with insightful, well-timed storytelling, she has a well-deserved following. Her Jazz without Borders is definitely a special feel- good evening that warms your heart and leaves you humming happily.

For more information call (800) 838-3006, or visit www.jazzatpearls.com or www.luahadar.com. Jazz at Pearls, 256 Columbus @ Pacific, SF Cash only inside the club-2 beverage minimum-Under 21 OK.

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