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## ADVENTUROUS NYC-BASED JAZZ VOCALIST AND COMPOSER ANDREA WOLPER RELEASES 4<sup>th</sup> ALBUM AS A LEADER

### WANDERLUST

Coming April 12, 2024

Although vocalist, composer, and arranger **ANDREA WOLPER** started her professional career singing jazz standards, her eclectic tastes and multidisciplinary talents have led her to forge her own path. Her newest recording, **WANDERLUST**, is an apt title for her peregrinations down the byways of improvisatory vocal jazz. The album comprises seven of Wolper's original compositions and five reimagined songs by other jazz and pop artists.

**WANDERLUST** (Moonflower Music) is Wolper's fourth album as a leader, and follows *Parallel Lives* (Jazzed Media, 2011), *The Small Hours* (VarisOne.Jazz 2005), and her self-titled debut, *Andrea Wolper* (1998). She has also appeared on recordings by other artists across jazz genres, from the straight-ahead Heavenly Big Band to free jazz icon William Parker.

Wolper is one of the singers covered in *The Jazz Singers: The Ultimate Guide* (Backbeat Books). "A singer who brings songs to life, whatever their source" (International Review of Music), Wolper is also known as "a terrific arranger" (GoodSound), and Cadence Magazine calls her songwriting "easily superior."

A New York City resident, Wolper enlisted some of the finest musicians the city has to offer, including longtime bandmates **JOHN DI MARTINO** (piano), **KEN FILIANO** (bass), and **MICHAEL TA THOMPSON** (drums), with **CHARLIE BURNHAM** (violin) and **JEFF LEDERER** (clarinet & flute); Lederer also co-produced the album.

It has been 13 years since Wolper released her previous album, but that doesn't mean she's been idle; in fact, it means the opposite. In addition to performing regularly in many of New York's top jazz clubs (the Blue Note, Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Mezzrow, 55 Bar, Kitano, and others), she has toured in the U.S. and abroad, attended a number of artist's residencies as a composer, and recorded and performed for other artists. She is also an accomplished writer whose journalism and poetry have appeared in numerous publications, a talented photographer, and a busy teacher of voice, songwriting, and jazz performance.

Wolper was born and raised in Northern California, moving to New York to attend the prestigious Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre. But music was always an important force in her life, and although she appeared on stage, the call of jazz was too strong. She began serious study of the music, eventually finding her way into the city's jazz scene. "My entry point to jazz was singing standards, songs I'd heard growing up. Over time, though, I was exposed to so many different artists and ways of expressing the music, and before I knew it, I was writing songs, arranging, and exploring various approaches to improvisation."

A few of Wolper's originals on **WANDERLUST** tease the listener with literary references. On "Nevermore," her smoky, bluesy voice and the dark sound of the voice/bass duo recreate the foreboding atmosphere of Edgar Allan Poe's famous poem, "The Raven."

In the playfully titled "The Winter of Our Content," a song that sounds much like an entry from the Great American Songbook, Wolper harkens back to her theatre days with a lyric that borrows from Shakespeare's canon to pay fond tribute to a love that endures through life's ups and downs. "Although at times we're tempest tossed / The love we found we've never lost / For 'neath that starry firmament / There hangs a tale most excellent / Of how we fell / The Winter of Our Content."

Poetry wonks may recognize a phrase from Rainier Maria Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet* in "The Nature of Life," which Wolper wrote in Spring 2020. "There had been so much political upheaval, and then the pandemic shutdown happened. If I've learned anything in life, it's that everything changes—good things, bad things, everything. Remembering that helped me stay centered." As Wolper reminds us that "Tides wax and wane," and "Dark night surrenders to daylight," her ethereal singing and the track's spare instrumentation of shruti box (played by Wolper), drums, and violin give the song a mystical, spontaneous feel.

Other Wolper originals include "Sobe E Desce" (Portuguese for "up and down"), set to a baião groove. Wolper sings the wordless melody doubled by Lederer's flute, followed by a group joyride trading solos. On the album's other wordless tune, "Eventide," Wolper's vocal plays a supporting role to Burnham's violin and Filiano's arco bass as the lead melodic voices. Wolper started writing the song while on an early evening walk during an artist's residency in Nebraska, and the tune conveys the poignant feeling of a small town winding up its day. In "Still Life," a duo with Di Martino, Wolper paints a picture of how everything is the same, yet nothing is the same when a loved one is no longer there. "Cisluna" is a freely improvised piece that Wolper, Di Martino, Filiano, and Thompson created on the spot.

The album's reimagined covers include the opening track, Ray Charles and Rick Ward's "Light Out of Darkness." Introduced by Charles in 1965, the song's lyrics resonate powerfully today. Wolper turns country songwriter Wayne Carson's "Dog Day Afternoon" into a jazz ballad featuring a beautiful violin solo by Burnham. "Been to Canaan" is a Carole King song that Wolper once again convincingly turns into a jazz tune, featuring Lederer on flute. Sting's "I Burn for You" features violin, flute, and arco bass rubbing up against one another in an almost discordant way, enhancing the song's enigmatic tension. Abbey Lincoln's "The Music is the Magic" is given a sly treatment, and features a group solo for violin, clarinet, and voice.

**WANDERLUST** is a showcase for Andrea Wolper's adventurous, creative spirit, and the results are delightfully surprising whether she sings her own compositions or her imaginative re-workings of other artists' compositions. Although she has been a working singer and songwriter for over 30 years, a mainstay of the New York City jazz scene, it is time for a wider audience to experience the originality of this singular artist.

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**WANDERLUST** will be released on April 12, 2024, available at [andreawolper.bandcamp.com](https://andreawolper.bandcamp.com). It will be available on all streaming platforms starting in May 2024.

**Online:**

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