



MEDIA RELEASE
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**IN A CLASS OF HER OWN:
GITA REACHES NEW HEIGHTS WITH “ANGEL EYES”**

Gita Blakeney Saltus, one of Bermuda’s best-loved musical talents, is poised to win a world of new fans with her long-awaited new CD, *Angel Eyes*.

The CD is being launched December 1 at an exclusive party sponsored by Hamilton-based insurers Freisenbruch-Meyer Group to be broadcast live on KJAZ 98.1, Bermuda’s jazz radio station from 6 to 7 p.m.m

It is 10 years since her last full CD, *My Favourite Things* and *Angel Eyes* has been five years in the making. “People have been asking me for a long time to do a follow up and here it is,” explained Gita. “*Angel Eyes* is a collection of standard jazz tunes that I have interpreted, and brought my own style to. They are all songs that are dear to my heart for various reasons.”

The 12 tracks include Gita’s unique performances of standards like George and Ira Gershwin’s *Someone To Watch Over Me*, Duke Ellington’s *Sophisticated Lady*, her own blend of *Black Coffee*, the song made famous by Peggy Lee and Ella Fitzgerald; Nat King Cole’s classics *Autumn Leaves* and *Angel Eyes* and Al Jarreau’s *Spain (I Can Recall)*.

Angel Eyes not only reinforces her reputation as the most distinctive interpretive jazz vocalist in Bermuda but also marks a new maturity as an arranger and an artist who can hold her own in any contemporary jazz company.

All the songs on *Angel Eyes* were co-arranged by Gita and New York-based jazz pianist David Budway, who also plays on the album is regarded as one of the most distinctive pianists on today’s international jazz scene and a highly sought-after accompanist, arranger, film composer, and songwriter who has performed

with jazz legends such as Clark Terry, Joe Pass, Jon Faddis, Louie Bellson, Dave Liebman, George Benson, Mark Murphy, Jimmy Heath, and Dizzy Gillespie. He is currently on tour with Regina Carter.

Gita met David Budway some years ago when he visited the Island for a jazz event, promoted by David Frost. “I had the distinct pleasure of performing with him,” recalled Gita, “His piano style was reminiscent of Andrew Morrison, who was the pianist on my first CD, and I was thrilled that someone of his calibre agreed to work on the album with me.”

The CD also features talented American horn player Sam Hankins who has performed and recorded with the Glenn Miller big band, Clark Terry, the O’Jays, Aretha Franklin, Temptation, and the Dells, and is presently musical director at Berkeley Institute.

In addition the album features the talents of well-known Bermudian musicians Whency Woolridge (bass), Tony Cox (drums) and Keith Caisey (percussion). The album was recorded at Steve Easton’s Just Platinum Studio in Bermuda.

“All these guys brought an incredible amount of experience to the project so that was really exciting for me,” added Gita. “I’m so glad that they joined me in making it a reality. The elements have come together beautifully and I am very, very proud of it.”

She has dedicated the CD to the late local musicians, Andrew Morrison and Michael Fox. “They have both passed but they were good friends of mine and I owe them so much. There is a lot of sentimentality in this project for me

“Music is my soul, my raison d’etre. The older I get, the more I realise that this is a calling, a gift – and I’m ready to share it with the world!”

Mr Michael Freisenbruch, President of the Freisenbruch-Meyer Group, said: “The Freisenbruch-Meyer Group is thrilled and honoured to host Gita’s launch party at our Front Street offices. As Bermuda’s largest local insurance intermediary, we know what it takes to set goals and work hard to reach them. Freisenbruch-Meyer is a local company so we are particularly proud to be associated with a gifted Bermudian such as Gita. We wish her every success with “Angel Eyes” and in her future career and we encourage other talented Bermudians to emulate her poise, drive and dedication.”

Founded in 1980, the Freisenbruch-Meyer Group provides insurance agency, broking, underwriting and management services to the domestic and international Bermudian markets.

In addition to the new CD, Gita will shortly be launching her own website, www.gitathesong.com. The site name and the fact that *Angel Eyes* is credited as being by “Gita”, not Gita Blakeney, also marks a new direction for the singer.

“My mother called me Gita because she liked the sound of the name but it is of Hindi and Sanskrit origin, and it means “song”, she truly defined my destiny, so now I thought it was appropriate for me as an artist to just use the one name.”

And as her distinctive new album demonstrates, there is only one Gita!

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About Gita

Her home is the exotic island of Bermuda, and her talent will soon be renowned internationally. Her name is Gita - a petite contralto whose raw stylised singing is a welcome departure from today's studio productions.

Gita pledges an allegiance to a fusion of jazz and R&B music about life and love, with an appeal crosses over genres and generations. "I would like to have the authenticity of my spirit be captured through my music," she says. "I want to touch the world!"

She draws from a variety of truly talented influences, which are reflected in her developed, stage presence, vocal control, and versatility. These influences, a combination of traditional jazz singers and contemporary stylists include the legendary Sarah Vaughn, Nancy Wilson, Shirley Horn, Gladys Knight, Sade and Barbara Striesand.

Gita speaks French fluently, having studied it formally in a Canadian University, with subsequent tutelage at the Université de la Sorbonne in Paris France where she made her home for a period of two years. She has a passion for the fine arts, and has received formal vocal and dance training.

Her career highlights include:

- Released first CD, *My Favourite Things*. 1996, Bermuda
- Released second CD, *Angel Eyes*, 2006, Bermuda
- Three- time recipient of Bermudian Magazine's "Best of Bermuda Award" - 1996, 1998 and 2005
- Performed a sold out concert at the City Hall Theatre in 1996, Bermuda
- Invited Guest Performer at the "3rd Annual Salute to Soul Birthday Celebration for Isaac Hayes, sponsored by radio station Kiss, 1999, Copacabana in NYC
- Featured artist on TV series "BET ON JAZZ", 1998, (Black Entertainment Television)
- Interviewed on the BBC Radio Talk Show. 1997, which featured her C.D. London, England
- Performed in Bermuda Jazz Festivals 1996, 1997 and 2005 and was opening act for Jonathan Butler, Lee Ritenour, Herbie Mann, Cassandra Wilson, Chris Botti and Angie Stone
- Leading vocalist role in "Greg Thompson's Bermuda Revue", Southampton Princess Hotel, Bermuda, 1990
- Performed at the Smithsonian Folklore Festival, 2001, Washington, DC
- Guest Performer at "Marketing Opportunities in Black Entertainment" event, 1997, New York City
- Performed on behalf of the Bermuda insurance market at the RIMS Conferences in 2001 (Atlanta, Georgia), 2002 (New Orleans), 2003 (Chicago), and 2004 (San Diego)
- Performed at the Four Seasons Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada for the Bermuda Department of Tourism
- Performed at the Irving Plaza with the Clarke Eno Orchestra. 1997, NYC
- Performed at the World Bank for the World Conference of Mayors, 1998, Washington DC
- Performed in a talent showcase before a select group of music industry executives and media personnel, which included Sylvia Rhone, CEO, East West Records and Cynthia Horner, Executive Editor, "Right On" Magazine who featured Gita in her June 1992 edition.

Gita was also featured on the CDs, "Inside my Mind" by Vic Glazer, and "Christmas in Bermuda", by Lynda Lovett. While she dedicates herself to The Bermuda National Gallery as Development Director, she remains poised for the future, performing throughout Bermuda and abroad. Most recently, she was the recipient of the Crystal Award by Adlev Entertainment for her musical contributions to Bermuda.

With her dynamic drive and determination Gita's career promises to be a long and successful one that reaches far beyond her beloved Bermuda.

SEE HER ... FEEL HER ... KNOW HER!!