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Nothin' but *Blue Skies* for Anne Davis on this latest drop

By "CP" Christopher Peppas

Anne Davis has been a force around the local jazz scene for some time, entertaining audiences at the St. Kate Arts Hotel, The Jazz Estate, The Bay, Blu at the Top of the Pfister and more.

Now if you haven't had the chance to see this vocalist front a veritable panoply of various jazz configurations, you, too, can take home a

little slice to keep you company until your next opportunity.

Anne Davis' *Blue Skies* dropped recently and it is a real treat for the ears of any fan of the genre or just plain lover of good music.

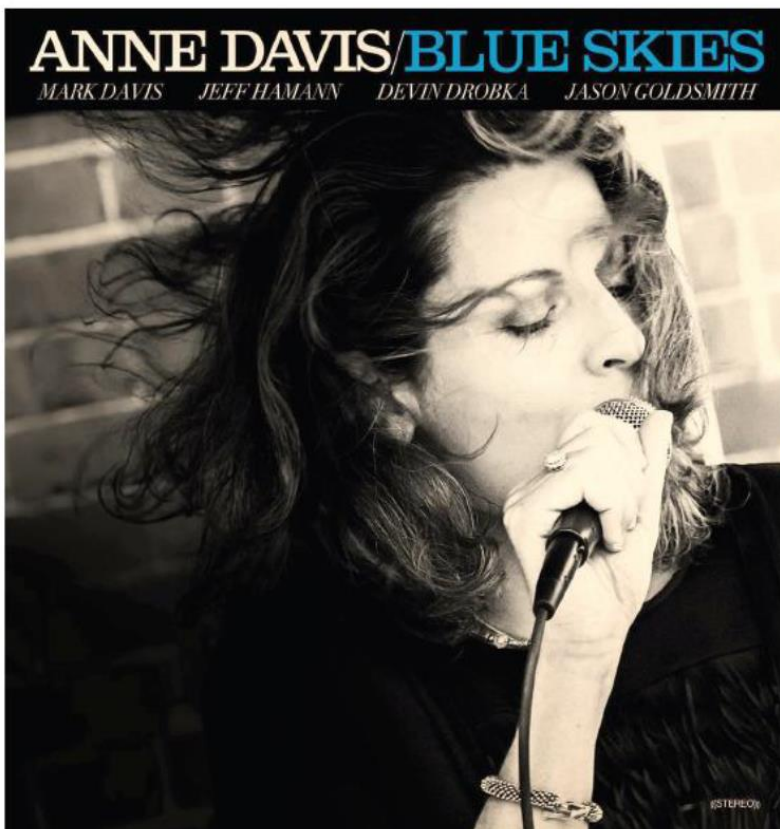
While it is a collection of some of the best-known standards, it is far from standard fare. Rather, it is an aural feast.

While the part of her name, Lucius, is not printed on the cover of the artwork of the jewel case of this musical missive, it does provide a double entendre for what the listener will be treated to, id est, tasty phrasing curated from a big, juicy palette of word pictures.

Anne has perfected the difficult task of bringing just the right amount of bounce and verve to ballads and lively offerings alike.

Her more soulful take on Arthur Hamilton's *Cry Me A River* has taken its place right alongside Diana Krall's version as a personal fave.

No woman is an island. And when it came to finding folks to collab on this



project, Anne Davis tabbed a Mini-Milwaukee Mount Rushmore of players to help get 'er done.

Her regular pianist, Mark (no relation) Davis took time out from his duties as co-founder of the Milwaukee Jazz Institute to tickle the 88s on the eleven songs in this opus.

Jeff (Hey, man) Hamann laid down the bass line, power player Jason Goldsmith brought his sax appeal to the effort and Devin Drobka was behind the drum kit and an assemblage of cymbals.

The work became even more special and had a Proud Mom Moment when son Evan Davis provided harmonies on the title track. The Senior graduates from Madison this month where he performs in an a cappella group.

Ric Probst engineered the effort that was recorded at Tanner-Monagle, which has



been working practically 'round the clock, putting out some great work. Nariadyme Studio did the mixing with the skill of Wolfgang Puck.

Keeping it in the jazz family, trumpeter Jamie Breiwick's B Side Graphics did the cover art with Leiko Napoli photos as its centerpiece. The cover pic captures Anne in mid-emotion and a more playful homage to Audrey Hepburn graces the inside.



You may have a hard time identifying a favorite among the tracks. And that's okay. There isn't a song on there that doesn't enrich the audience in some way, shape or form. They all have a way of reaching into your soul and making it pay attention.

Ms. Davis' turn on *Sometimes I'm Happy (Sometimes I'm Blue)* has a hint of Billie Holiday in it, crisp, clean and makes one want to skip on the sidewalk along with it.

Of course, love is a major theme throughout the disc, you know, just because... But when you start with *This*

Can't Be Love and make your way to *I Love Being Here With You* and then *Almost Like Being In Love*, well, you get the idea.

Anne closes out her masterpiece with *What A Wonderful World*. And it most assuredly is just as long as Anne Lucius Davis continues to lend her gargantuan talent to us all.

You definitely want to come to her shows and hear her live. In the short term, this album will do nicely until then.

Dedicated to my forever lovely mother, Rita.

Expressing immeasurable love to my family and friends and profound gratitude to everyone involved in this project. Thank you for supporting my dreams.
Love,
Anne