



Advance Program Notes

Jane Monheit

Hello Bluebird, Celebrating the Jazz of Judy Garland

Saturday, February 28, 2015, 7:30 PM

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

Jane Monheit *Hello Bluebird, Celebrating the Jazz of Judy Garland*

Jane Monheit, *vocals*
Michael Kanan, *piano*
Neal Miner, *bass*
Rick Montalbano, *drums*

Jane Monheit will announce the program from the stage.

Partial song list:

You Gotta Have Me Go with You

I Wish I Were in Love Again

The Sweetest Sound

That Old Black Magic

Johnny One Note

What Am I Here for

How About You

Love

Zing Went the Strings of My Heart

Ballad medley: *The Boy Next Door/But Not for Me/The Man That Got Away*

Get Happy

Closing medley: *Over the Rainbow/Hello Bluebird*

About Jane Monheit



"I want to get away from the drama, and celebrate what we all loved about Judy—the immense joy she brought through song, and her innate understanding of jazz.

She did so much more than break hearts—she put them together again—and that's what we're going to be about with this show!"

"Everything I'm singing now is a reflection of my truest self," says Jane Monheit. "After all this time in the industry, after touring for 13 years, it's time to just be me, with complete and utter freedom."

Monheit's sense of liberation is apparent throughout *The Heart of the Matter*, the acclaimed, Grammy-nominated vocalist's ninth studio album. It can be felt in her wide-ranging choice of material, in the unique arrangements, and in her own fearless performances and interpretations. The diverse and very personal set of songs includes both familiar standards and compositions by John Lennon and Paul McCartney; Randy Newman; two songs by Ivan Lins, recorded in the original Portuguese; and, for the first time, a Monheit original.

"I knew that I wanted the material to be chosen based on the lyrical content," says Monheit of the eclectic track list. "Over the years, my singing has really taken on that focus. At the beginning of my career, I wanted to show proof of my knowledge of music, that I could improvise and sing through the changes. But as I got older, especially after getting married and having a child, I started feeling the lyrics more, simply because I had more to sing about. Focusing on the technical side was part of my learning process, but over time, all of that became a natural part of my singing. Now I use it to support the lyric, not just to prove myself."

Monheit has been a leading light in both the jazz and cabaret worlds since emerging as a finalist in the Thelonious Monk Institute's 1998 vocal competition. In addition to her own recordings, she has worked alongside the likes of Terence Blanchard, Tom Harrell, and Ivan Lins. She says that the distinctive, continually surprising sound of *The Heart of the Matter* is the result of an especially satisfying collaboration with Grammy-winning producer Gil Goldstein, who has previously worked with such giants as Wayne Shorter, Gil Evans, and Pat Metheny. The pair first joined forces for part of Monheit's 2009 album *The Lovers, The Dreamers, and Me*.

"When Gil is around, amazing music happens," says the singer. "He brings a very specific thing...there's a special vibe that infuses every single thing he does. The last time we worked together, I had a newborn, I wasn't sleeping...I barely knew who I was, and Gil made such magic happen that I couldn't wait to work with him again. And as soon as we started, it was perfect...the very first take was *Depende de Nos*, which we ended up using. We actually made this album even faster than my very first."

Though the dozen tracks were recorded in just three days, Monheit notes that the sessions came at "a very intense time" in her own life. Her young son had recently injured his arm and needed surgery, and her grandparents had been displaced by Hurricane Sandy, losing nearly everything they owned. "When you're isolated in the vocal booth, you're able to process everything," she says. "There are no distractions, so you get inside yourself more to reach a deeper level of interpretation."

Her biggest revelation came while she was singing *Until It's Time for You to Go*, written by Buffy Sainte-Marie. "It's a beautiful love song," says Monheit, "but it hit me while I was recording that for me, it's about my son's childhood ending—that the little boy I know now will be gone. It just struck like lightning, and after we were done, it hung around me like a fog for days."

About Jane Monheit, continued

She also felt comfortable enough to take on some music that she had always viewed as “sacred,” and fulfill a career-long wish to record something by the Beatles. She had long considered recording *Golden Slumbers*, but never felt sure about how to interpret *Carry That Weight*, the song it’s paired with on *Abbey Road*. Monheit’s husband and drummer, Rick Montalbano, had the idea to match *Golden Slumbers* with another Lennon/McCartney ballad, *The Long and Winding Road*, which they discovered to be a perfect fit.

“Taken together, the meaning becomes deeper than that of just a lullaby or a break-up song,” she says. “I tend to go for darker interpretations,” she says with a laugh, “but it’s nice when it’s left a bit open for the listener to find their own meaning, as well.”

Monheit’s passion for Brazilian music colors a big swath of *The Heart of the Matter*—most obviously in the two selections written by the great Ivan Lins. “This music has always been a huge part of my life,” she says. “It’s important to me that I sing in Portuguese whenever possible, out of respect for the composer and lyricist.” But Brazilian rhythms also reached into one of the album’s English-language pieces—a striking version of Joe Raposo’s *Sesame Street* anthem *Sing*.

“I have wanted to do a Brazilian version of that song for my entire adult life,” Monheit says, noting that she first needed to get past the idea that it would be seen as a novelty. “I’m a mother now, and that has given me the power to not care anymore...I’ll sing any song I want, the way I want, as long as it comes from the heart. And a lot of experience goes into that feeling, both good and bad.”

The confidence manifests most visibly with the inclusion of Monheit’s own *Night Night Stars*, the first song she has released, for which she has written both music and lyrics. “I don’t find time to write very often,” she says. “This was based on something my son said on a drive at night when he was two years old. I wasn’t sure about using it, but Gil believed in me, and that meant a lot.”

From the song choices to the performances, *The Heart of the Matter* is a work deeply informed by Jane Monheit’s life—as a woman, wife, and mother in the second decade of a remarkable career—and it reaches emotional levels she attributes to an “extreme comfort zone” in the recording studio. “It was a small group, we’re all friends, and everyone really wanted to be there,” she says. “I’m very close with my band, so to hear Gil’s beautiful work with my family beneath it inspired me to be completely unselfconscious... I think I’ve finally reached my level of onstage, live interpretation in the studio, which has always been a challenge for me.”

“When you’re playing with people you love,” says Monheit, “it always makes for better music.”

Engagement Activities

Saturday, February 28, 2015, 6:15 PM

Play in the Lobby: Highlands Jazz Quintet

Balcony Lobby (3rd floor, Street and Davis Performance Hall)

Preceding the performance by Jane Monheit, the Highlands Jazz Quintet will play selections from their standard repertoire. The group was organized in 2008 and performs in local venues, either as the full quintet or in smaller configurations. They recorded their first album, *2 Degrees East 3 Degrees West*, in 2012. The quintet currently features Justin Craig on guitar, Lou Madsen on tenor sax, Paul Deck on piano, Nick Romantini on bass, and Bill Ray on drums.

Free; hors d'oeuvres will be served; cash bar

Saturday, February 28, 2015, 9:30 PM

Meet the Artist: Jane Monheit

Grand Lobby

Following *Hello Bluebird, Celebrating the Jazz of Judy Garland*, join the singer in the lobby during this CD signing event.

Free

In the Galleries



Shinique Smith

Gnosis, 2013

Ink, fabric, and acrylic on wood panel

48 x 48 x 5 inches

Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan Gallery, New York/Shanghai

Explore CONNECTIONS between works of art, artists, and viewers; between art past and present; and between ideas and their aesthetic manifestation.

THREADED

Three one-person exhibitions

featuring Shinique Smith, Angelo Filomeno, and Polly Apfelbaum

Through Sunday, April 12, 2015

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 AM-6 PM/Saturday-Sunday, 10 AM-4 PM

Three one-person exhibitions by renowned artists Shinique Smith, Angelo Filomeno, and Polly Apfelbaum, who work with threaded material as their medium, mining its symbolic significance while creating fascinating and unexpected visual forms