

Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

A voice that touches the heart!
UNIQUE FROM MARTINIQUE



Pic: Dennis Austin

Free
Groovy
Jazz

BOOKINGS

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Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

POEM & CONTENTS LIST

La vie suit son cours

Life follows its course

Comme celui d'un cours d'eau

Like a stream

Que l'on aurait rencontré par hasard

That you chance upon

Au cours d'une ballade sous la pluie

While out walking in the rain

By Francine Luce



PRESS PACK

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Design: Bin design

Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

PERFORMANCE



Pic: Chiara Ambrosio

Francine's innovative compositions for her own band are highly colourful, rhythmic pieces linking Groove, Jazz and Free improvisations with sound exploration. In her music Francine has a versatile approach and her song writing explores every colour of the music and sound spectrum from delicate pastels to blinding fluorescents from the melodic to the wild.

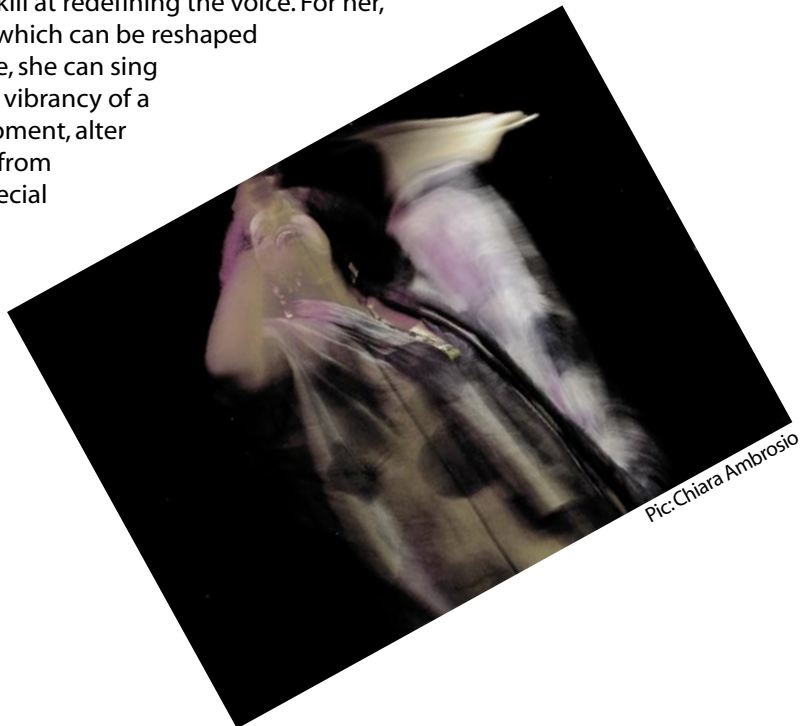
She is recognized internationally as one of our great musical explorers. Always open to novelty, Francine creates compositions and musical maps for her musicians to follow in all possible combinations, thus you can hear the full band and seamlessly, a vocal duet with the double bass.

You can also discover the magic of the sound of English, French and the Creole from Martinique in her lyrics. Luce sees no limits to music and her band flows with infinite creativity and sound fusion.

Francine is well known for her skill at redefining the voice. For her, the voice is a versatile instrument which can be reshaped according to its purpose: for example, she can sing "straight" with the warmth, range and vibrancy of a great jazz or blues vocalist and, in a moment, alter her voice to create pure sounds drawn from Nature and Life's experience. It is this special blend of song and sound which makes Francine's treatment of the voice so unique.

In her performances she goes far beyond vocal expression to using her whole being and expresses herself not only through her voice but also through her body; Every note, every sound has a physical consequence turning each performance into an aural-visual event. With a huge presence on stage and incredible vocal techniques, a performance with Francine is always exciting, innovative and entertaining - a memorial experience.

Nothing is static with Francine. As life and Nature, each day has a new dawn, and so it is that each performance with Francine is so special with a life of its own.



Pic: Chiara Ambrosio

**EVERY NOTE...
EVERY SOUND...
EVERY MOVEMENT...
IS A NEW EXPERIENCE.**

Janine Irons

Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

BIOGRAPHY

Francine has been on the international music scene since 1980. Born in France, she started her career as a singer songwriter in Martinique where she is originally from. In the last few years she has appeared at major jazz events worldwide: the **Jazz Britannia Festival** (London 2005), the **Return To Roots Festival** (South Africa 2005 and 2003), the **Varna International Jazz Festival** (Bulgaria 2003) and has regularly sung at one of the most famous London music venues the Royal Festival Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall eg: with the **Francine Luce Band** in April 2000 supporting Archie Shepp and in Nov 1999; with **Lester Bowie** and **Louis Moholo** at the **Oris Jazz Festival** (London 1998) and with the **Louis Moholo Quintet** supporting Art Ensemble of Chicago in 1997.

Her unique vocal talent has brought her in contact with many of the world finest musicians including Louis MOHOLO, Alex MAGUIRE, Pule PHETO, Jason YARD, Evan PARKER, John EDWARDS, Steve BERESFORD, Maggie NICOLS, Pat THOMAS, Thèbe LIPERE, Mark BOUKOUYA, Alex and Jaky BERNARD, Joëlle LEANDRE, Alex KOKOSKY, Luther FRANÇOIS and many more.

No surprise, then, that Francine is in great demand from bandleaders and, in addition to leading her own band, has been involved with a number of different groups including: the LOUIS MOHOLO septet "VIVA LA BLACK" and 26 piece band the "DEDICATION ORCHESTRA", the "RETURN TO ROOTS ORCHESTRA", the "STEVE BERESFORD ENSEMBLE", the "EVAN PARKER EXTENDED PROJECT", the "BEN PARK ENSEMBLE", the LOZ SPEYER ensemble "RAREMIX".

Francine's collaboration with most of these artists led her to appearances at a large number of International Jazz and Improvised Music Festivals including, amongst others, the **CMAC Jazz Festival** (Martinique 1999), the **Bimhuis Festival** (Holland: Amsterdam 1996), the **Duisburg Jazz Festival** (Germany 1995), the **Canaille Women Festival** (Germany: Franckfurt 1995), the **Clusone Jazz Festival** (Italy 1995), the **Moers Jazz Festival** (Germany 1994), the **Contemporary Improvised Music Festival** (Holland: Den Haag 1993), the **Zurich International Jazz Festival** (Switzerland 1992), the **Linz Jazz Festival** (Austria 1992), the **Jazz Valley Festival 90** (France: Val d'Oise 1990), the **Sardegna Jazz Festival** (Sant' Anna Arresi 1988).

Always inspired and inspiring others with her spiritual beliefs; Francine currently sings for the **OKI DO YOGA** based in Colbordolo (Italy) and for the **Women's Federation for World Peace** based in London, helping to support love, peace and harmony throughout the world. She also sung for OKI DO YOGA in Japan.

Her work has encompassed to dance and theatre companies notably **Fin Walker Dance**, **Pan project**, **Public dreamers**, composer **Ben Park** and poet **Joby Bernabé**.

In 1999 Luce released her acclaimed first CD **Bò kay la vi-a** (OGUN) featuring **Louis Moholo**, **Paul Rogers**, **Keith Tippett**, **Paul Rutherford**, **Claude Deppa** and **Evan Parker**.

Francine Luce welcomes the new season with her new band.



Pic: Peter Symes

A VOICE THAT TOUCHES THE HEART

WORLD CLASS MUSICAL PARTNERSHIPS

Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

LIVE REVIEWS

The remarkable singer Francine Luce.
Guardian; London - John Fordham
London Jazz Festival

Chicago's trumpet star Lester Bowie turned out for Louis Moholo and his pan - African drum ensemble at the Queen Elisabeth Hall and played as if he had been with them for years, though Francine Luce's dramatic vocals almost stole this show.

Evening Standard; London - Jack Massarik
Oris Jazz Festival , QEH - Louis Moholo / Lester Bowie

Est-ce un bruit,	<i>Is it a noise,</i>
un écho, un oiseau,	<i>an echo, a bird,</i>
une voix ?	<i>a human voice?</i>
Une voix, celle de	<i>It's a voice: that of</i>
Francine Luce...	<i>Francine Luce...</i>

France - Antilles; Martinique

Francine Luce est dotée d'une voix exceptionnelle...
Francine Luce is gifted with an exceptional voice...

France- Antilles Magazine; Martinique
CMAC Jazz festival - Fort de France

Francine Luce, una brillante cantante ...
Francine Luce, a brilliant singer...

Il Tirreno; Italy - Stefano Cavallini
Gianni Coscia's performance - Livorno

...Sie gilt in Jazz-Kreisen als die Entdeckung der letzten Jahre.
...In Jazz circles she is rated the discovery of recent years.

Tip magazine; Berlin - Ingo Schütte

Francine Luce can find her way around free music, jazz and fusion.
She has already made her distinctive mark.

Guardian; London - John Fordham
London songstresses' Festival Union chapel - Islington

Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

CD REVIEWS

Bò kay la vi-a OGUN (OGCD012), c/o Cadillac Jazz Distribution

Une voix merveilleuse ... Francine Luce s'est entouré d'une équipe de rêve pour son premier disque. Des chansons et des textes en Créole, en Français et en Anglais font bon ménage avec des improvisations vocales et la recherche sonore. De belles mélodies créoles flottent dans le brouillard des sons produits dans l'eau par Luce, Parker and Deppa (Pokéya)!.. Quelle voix!!

...A marvellous voice...Francine has surrounded herself with a dream team for her first record. There is a lovely mix of songs, texts in Creole, French, English and the vocal improvisations and the exploration of the sound. The beautiful Creole melodies blend with the sound of water that Luce, Parker and Deppa use on (Pokéya)... What a voice!!

CHRONIQUES - Jean-Michel Van Schouwborg

... With an astonishing voice. On Bò kay la vi-a she sings with complete conviction and technical surety, in a very personal hybrid of traditional song styles and free improvisation. One glance at her band should be a sufficient indication not just of her musical proclivities but of her great talent. Parker, Rutherford, Rogers, Tippetts and Moholo are masters of extended technique and high level of communication - Luce has no problem jumping in at the most intense level of musicality and interaction...

I hope to be hearing more Luce in the future. Her range, tone, and articulation are fabulous... Strongly recommended.

CADENCE Vol.26 No.4: The review of Jazz & Blues, Jason Bivins - USA 2000

Francine Luce is a vocalist from Martinique, who is joined by the stellar line up of Claude Deppa, Evan Parker, Paul Rutherford, Keith Tippett, Paul Rogers and Louis Moholo. Her heartfelt singing (in both French and English) dominates the album, and she is as inventive in her use of wordless vocal effects as any of the players on their instruments. As she notes: "The frogs, crickets and birds from Martinique are good improvisers, too." Her vocalising suggests she has listened hard to them. Intriguingly, Luce, Parker and Rogers play as a trio on the track 'Pokéya', on which all three are credited with playing "water", and Luce does sound rather bubbly. I can't wait for the live show!

VOX CONTENTS 30 RUBBERNECK; John Eyles - England 1999

... Singer Francine Luce, born in Martinique, has a great future ahead of her. She is the discovery of the year- and that's no exaggeration. Luce owns the type of voice which 'gives you goosepimples', so to speak. She is a gifted improviser who knows how to spin a vibrating web of songful discourse and free sound/colour interactions.

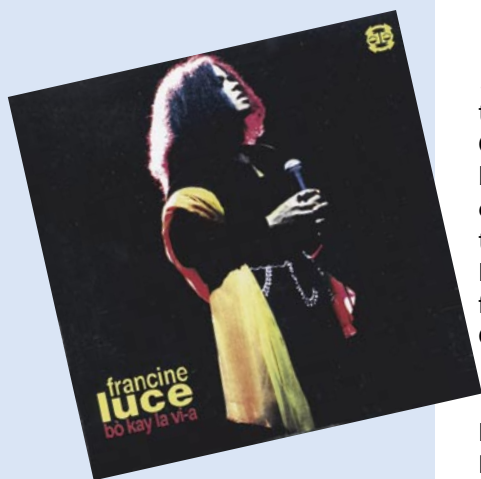
She resides mostly in England and is in contact with the 'crème de la crème' of British music improvisors. The improvised pieces on the CD have a predominantly, glasslike mood. Luce's voice either covers the finely spun soundlayers of her musical partners like a piece of lace or grates against them with hot breath. One doesn't often see a debut of such conviction, strength and emotional depth."

JAZZ LIVE Issue 125/99; HAN - Austria 1999

... L'émotion est partout, dans la moindre note du pianiste, dans le plus petit souffle de la voix... L'émotion, la rigueur et la qualité sont au rendez-vous. Ce disque est une (autre) grande merveille.

Emotion is everywhere, in the smallest piano sounds and vocal breath... Emotions, precision, and high quality are united. This CD is marvellous.

IMPROJAZZ N 60 - France 1999



Une voix martiniquaise à Londres

Francine Luce a rencontré la musique improvisée à Londres, parallèlement ce fut une découverte des potentialités de sa propre voix qu'elle explore depuis dix ans comme un instrument

EMMENÉS par les circonstances ou simplement désireux de trouver un cadre à leur créativité, nombreux sont les martiniquais à «émigrer». Lors d'un voyage à Londres en 1983, un ami contrebassiste l'emmène à un concert qu'il doit donner, c'est le coup de foudre. Francine Luce chante depuis quelques années, un répertoire jazz, blues mais ce qu'elle découvre a une dimension autre. Elle



SINGERS

FRANCINE LUCE FINDING VOICE

Known for her incandescent voice improvisations with Louis Moholo's Viva La Black and collaborations on the worldwide stage with some of the world's finest jazz and improvising musicians, Francine Luce is defining her own ambitions.

Inspired by the unequivocal acclaim for Bô Kay La Vi-a, her superlative debut CD (Ogun 0012), Luce wants to establish a permanent band, and profile her own music live as much as possible. This is a significant decision in a career that has grown as much through a passionate capacity to mature opportunities and turn friendships with her peers into collaborations, as by importance of her time playing trumpet with 30's improvisers Dreamtime - Nick Evans, Jim Dvorak et al: "I got such joy from their music, I was energised, this was a crucial period in my life", the next she is laughing unrestrainedly at her audacity when her sheer love of music unexpectedly shaped her career: "I cut short a London holiday in 1986, to rush back to Paris to hear Lester Bowie play, my first time hearing him live. From the moment I discovered him on disc, I felt an unbelievable connection with his style. I was in love with the trumpet and had never heard anyone like him. Without making comparisons, he reminded me of myself! The finale saw all the musicians parading through the audience and I just couldn't help but reach for my trumpet and join in! "Bowie pointed to Francine to play the last note. "I would never do that now, go to a major festival and just play! I was young."

Numbers are important to Luce and, a magic lunar 12 years later, she was to share a stage with Lester Bowie as a fellow soloist with The African Drum Orchestra's 98 Oris at a party in '88 and said he'd found the voice he was seeking for eventual collaboration. Seven years later (another key Luce number) he called her to tour worldwide. Shortly before that Luce had considered launching her own band, but "I wasn't quite ready and I felt really comfortable with Viva La Black. Despite the band's longevity, strength between us all, it's hard to describe. After one festival in Italy we just kept on playing right up to the dressing-room, it was magic! Viva La Black has been an essential part of my career. I learnt so much you can't miss a second or you'll lose your entry point."



Quas are vital for Luce's music making, her forte is improvisation although that wasn't how she started. "I knew I had to sing horn I was about 8 and I really found my voice when I was 16. At 19, in my native Martinique, a chance meeting led to me joining my first band - Kampech. It was a fantastic experience, rehearsing every day for six months before our

first gig". Kampech's "avante garde West Indies music" wasn't quite what Francine wanted, she found that more back in London and Paris with people like Jean-Claude Montredon (with whom she recently headlined at the Martinique Jazz Festival). Her uncanny gift of meeting the right people, coupled with considerable talent matured through study, led her to double bassist Roberto Bellatalla, a significant muse playing her other favourite instrument who introduced her to many kindred spirits - notably Dreamtime and Maggie Nicols, for whose conceptual approach to

improvisation Francine has great respect. It was in a recording session with Bellatalla in Italy in 1987 that from a text and at first I simply dried up. Then, spontaneously, I made sounds I had never sung before, I found I could use my voice like my trumpet and astounded even myself That was it! I loved it!"

It's this artistry alongside both a fascination for new sounds and a rare ability to re-interpret her vast musical experience in Caribbean, jazz, freeform, lyrical composition, that makes Bô Kay La Vi-a such a vocal-led tapestry where each musician (long term world-class associates Claude Deppa, Louis Moholo, Evan Parker, Paul Rogers, Paul Rutherford, Keith Tippett) adds extraordinary colour. Uncharted soundscapes evoked by rural Martinique (with sampled frogs opening the album) or the urban diaspora are illuminated by Francine's amazing voice. Her range is awesome, jazz enriched lyrics in French, Creole, English, half-silent breaths, sounds from across the globe.

from the sound possible ceiling London bath Francine's infinity for voice. She shares wisdom about here, how the earth is The heart of the album is vault bien un chanson" months to come to fruition birth" (Francine). Love in explored "I wanted to wr and at first I didn't know I said. I drew from three m in my life, and what I learn passion can only last so lo cannot exist without really person; how fear of being a unloved or loved too much judgements. The piece grew itself and all human experie you must love yourself so yo be loved". It's a profound cr essentially full of optimism ar "Steve Beresford helped arra following my feel for where I two chords, or a whole swathe improvisation. I was determin song on my album". The piece musical perceptions, sometime sometimes as dramatic as opera feel that you know so much and instant you realise you don't know at all".

A sentiment expressed by Tina Turner in an interview struck a chord with Francine. "Tina Turner said I can sing" - suggesting that when a person has an understanding gained through living can they become a true artist. I understand what she meant so well". When Lester Bowie greeted Francine at a concert, he said "So, you are a mature woman now!" She too, as a compliment.

On April 13th Francine premiered some impassioned, innovative and musically mature compositions at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. Opening for Archie Shepp, Luce shows her mettle, leading peers Claude Deppa (trumpet), Jason Yarde (sax), Pullye Photo (piano), John Edwards (double bass), and Brian Abrahams (drums). With typical verve she is only presenting two pieces from Bô

Kay La Vi-a. Francine Luce is ready to realise her ambition. "This is just my beginning," she said modestly. She will dedicate a special song An ti son ba-ou "in memory of Lester Bowie. "A little sound for you". (Debbie Golt)



Temporary Classical Music
SAXOPHONE
NETTE COLE
ANTHONY STE
JULIUS
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RHOD

Review

RURAL MARTINIQUE
Interviews Francine Luce whose
i-a - (Next to the house of life)"



Francine Luce

Luce's debut CD strides
few have the verve - or
ance to go. A world-class
er, she has selected some of
d's finest musicians, all long-
ues, to create a vibrant
each person

"I wanted to sing
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Martinique, when
meeting led to
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Inspired by the unequivocal acclaim for *Bò Kay La Vi-a*, her superlative debut CD (Ogun 0012), Luce wants to establish a permanent band, and profile her own music live as much as possible. This is a significant decision in a career that has grown as much through a passionate capacity to mature opportunities and turn friendships with her peers into collaborations, as by design. She has a powerful aura. One moment she speaks deeply about the importance of her time playing trumpet with 80's improvisers Dreamtime - Nick Evans, Jim Dvorak et al: "I got such joy from their music, I was energised, This was a crucial period in my life"; the next she is laughing unrestrainedly at her audacity when her sheer love of music unexpectedly shaped her career: "I cut short a London holiday in 1986, to rush back to Paris to hear Lester Bowie play, my first time hearing him live. From the moment I discovered him on disc, I felt an unbelievable connection with his style. I was in love with the trumpet and had never heard anyone like him. Without making comparisons, he reminded me of myself! The finale saw all the musicians parading through the audience and I just couldn't help but reach for my trumpet and join in!" Bowie pointed to Francine to play the last note. "I would never do that now, go to a major festival and just play! I was young."

Numbers are important to Luce and, a magic lunar 12 years later, she was to share a stage with Lester Bowie as a fellow soloist with The African Drum Orchestra's 98 Oris London Jazz Festival concert, alongside Louis Moholo and some of Africa's finest percussionists "That was one of the most important concerts of my life, Louis Moholo and Lester Bowie are my two greatest inspirations," Luce's luminary work with Louis Moholo's Viva La Black grew from another unusual connection. Moholo heard her singing at a party in '88 and said he'd found the voice he was seeking for eventual collaboration. Seven years later (another key Luce number) he called her to tour worldwide. Shortly before that Luce had considered launching her own band, but "I wasn't quite ready and I felt really comfortable with Viva La Black Despite the band's longevity, I fitted in so well immediately. There was a real strength between us all, it's hard to describe. After one festival in Italy we just kept on playing right up to the dressing-room. it was magic! Viva La Black has been an essential part of my career. I learnt so much you've got to be there, you can't miss a second or you'll lose your entry point."



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from the sound possibilities in a high-ceilinged London bathroom - oh and Francine's infinity for water as a Pisces. She shares wisdom about why we are here, how the earth is entrusted to us. The heart of the album is the epic "L'amour vaut bien un chanson" which took several months to come to fruition "like giving birth" (Francine). Love in all its facets is explored "I wanted to write a love song and at first I didn't know how" Francine said. I drew from three major relationships in my life, and what I learnt, about how passion can only last so long and how love cannot exist without really knowing a person; how fear of being alone, hurt, unloved or loved too much influences our judgements. The piece grew taking on love itself and all human experience and how you must love yourself so you can love and be loved". It's a profound creation, essentially full of optimism and faith. "Steve Beresford helped arrange it, following my feel for where I wanted just two chords, or a whole swathe of improvisation. I was determined to put this song on my album". The piece extends musical perceptions, sometimes lilting, sometimes as dramatic as opera. 'You can feel that you know so much and then in an instant you realise you don't know anything at all'.

A sentiment expressed by Tina Turner in a TV interview struck a chord with Francine. "Tina Turner said 'NOW I can sing'" - suggesting that only when a person has an understanding gained through living can they become a true artist. I understand what she meant so well". When Lester Bowie greeted Francine at their concert, he said 'So, you are a mature woman now!' She took it as a compliment.

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Francine Luce is ready to realise her ambition. "This is just my beginning," she said modestly. She will dedicate a special song *An ti son ba-ou* in memory of Lester Bowie. "A little sound for you". (Debbie Golt) Debbie Golt is Chair of Women in Music and DJs as DJ Debbie on www.gaialive.co.uk playing world jazz. She is also an arts officer and mother of two daughters.



Une voix martiniquaise à Londres

Francine Luce a rencontré la musique improvisée à Londres, parallèlement ce fut une découverte des potentialités de sa propre voix qu'elle explore depuis dix ans comme un instrument



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Francine appartient à une famille qui aime le chant, comme ça, pour le plaisir. Elle sourit au souvenir de ses sœurs qui entonnaient leur negro-spiritual dès que leur maman les invitaient à faire le ménage à fond le week-end. Elle baigne dans une atmosphère qui invite naturellement au chant, s'y essaye, on lui fait remarquer qu'elle a une jolie voix.....

Ses parents sont installés en France, elle a dix-neuf ans lorsqu'ils reviennent en Martinique. C'est ici, que Francine commence à chanter professionnellement avec le groupe «Kampech», une première expérience qui durera un an et dont elle



se souvient avec bonheur. Elle décide de revenir à Paris, acquiert une aisance plus large dans le chant en prêtant sa voix comme choriste à divers studios d'enregistrement, et mène parallèlement ses études pour rassurer ses parents. Elle a déjà vingt-six ans quand elle commence réellement à s'intéresser à la technique, à la structure de la voix. Elle se forme au «C.I.M.», le centre d'information musicale, aborde la trompette qui lui apporte une dimension supplémentaire. A travers les groupes de voix et l'enseignement collectif qui est dispensé, elle a l'opportunité de chanter les grands standards.... C'est également l'époque de ses premiers voyages à Londres; Francine avait surtout fréquenté la musique électrique, elle se laisse séduire par la musique acoustique. Sa rencontre avec la musique improvisée décidera de son choix de résider à Londres.

Une opportunité s'offre assez rapidement avec le groupe anglais «Dream Time». Elle accompagne notamment le

tromboniste Nick Evans, fait une tournée à travers l'Angleterre avec le groupe «Snakes of sound» grâce à une bourse allouée par le «Art Concil.»

JE N'ABANDONNERAI PAS

Elle éprouve une réelle satisfaction au plan relationnel. Dans ce milieu, la chanteuse rencontre des musiciens épanouis par l'amour qu'ils ont pour la musique improvisée. Elle découvre à leur contact cette capacité qui lui est offerte d'exprimer sa propre émotion «Tu utilises toutes les potentialités de ta voix. Les sons partent sans que tu saches réellement ce que sont ces émotions. Ça permet une plus grande liberté, une plus forte expression de soi-même.» Cette liberté qui s'ouvre chaque jour davantage, influence sa personnalité. La jeune femme plutôt discrète s'affirme davantage, son art, lui apporte, une spontanéité, probablement une sérénité plus

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grande. «Tu n'es pas là dans ton truc, il y a une osmose, un partage qui s'établit avec les musiciens; tu vas, tu reviens, tu explores...c'est vraiment la communication».

LES CLUBS, UNE PARTICULARITÉ DE LONDRES

Ce savoir qu'elle a acquis et continue d'acquérir, elle le transmet aujourd'hui à ses élèves. «le chant donne confiance en soi, il amène à une plus grande liberté. Transmettre ce savoir fait partie de mon projet, de ma philosophie.»

Francine forme mais continue de se former notamment à travers les ateliers de voix, les workshop «Pendant deux semaines, Tu prends un exercice qui va

vraiment te parler, tu le gardes et tu vas ailleurs...».

A Londres comme ailleurs, la musique improvisée n'est pas un genre très commercial. Il y a pourtant un public très amateur de ce genre de musique. Les propriétaires de pubs ont souvent ce qu'ils appellent des pièces en haut ou en bas, les clubs, qu'ils louent à des musiciens, comédiens, ou poètes... Francine Luce à son arrivée a géré l'un de ces clubs, elle y programait des concerts une ou deux fois par semaine. Les propriétaires rentabilisent leur investissement avec l'argent des consommations.

Francine est venue en vacances cette année et a vécu le festival du Marin «En Martinique, les choses commencent à bouger avec les différents festivals de Jazz, il ne faut surtout pas abandonner. Y'en a marre d'entendre que du zouk. Je ne suis pas contre, les gens font ce qu'ils

veulent, mais il faut de la musique pour tous. Il faudrait que le public s'ouvre à l'écoute de la musique. c'est dommage que le jazz et les musiques un peu plus expérimentales, qui demandent un peu plus d'attention, un peu plus d'écoute soient à ce point marginalisées...»

Francine Luce est également compositeur, elle travaille en ce moment avec un sextet en vue d'un C.D qui devrait sortir l'année prochaine. Elle joue notamment avec un batteur sud-africain Louis Mohol. Cette création est une combinaison de la musique improvisée et de ses compositions. Chaque titre est à la fois une fusion de sa voix et d'un seul instrument, (symbiose ensuite de sa voix et de l'ensemble des instruments). A travers ce disque, l'exploration s'ouvre et s'étend également à la musique et la voix parlée avec la poésie....

Chantal Kebail

FROM RURAL MARTINIQUE TO LONDON

Debbie Golt interviews **Francine Luce** whose first album is newly released: "Bò Kay La Vi-a - (Next to the house of life)" Ogun Records OGCD 012



Francine Luce

Francine Luce's debut CD strides boldly where few have the verve - or sheer brilliance to go. A world-class improviser, she has selected some of the world's finest musicians, all long-time colleagues, to create a vibrant vocal-led tapestry where each person adds extraordinary colour and tone to the passionate whole. Francine's compositions show her immense experience in jazz, african-caribbean, free-form - with accessible reference points in uncharted soundscapes evoked by rural Martinique or the urban Diaspora, ruled by love and without inhibitions. It's breathtakingly beautiful.

Early in her career Francine played trumpet, which inspired her vocal explorations - an admission I found very interesting given the interaction of trumpet and voice with blues singers like Bessie Smith. Luce leads Claude Deppa (trumpet), Paul Rutherford (trombone), Evan Parker (sax), Paul Rogers (bass), Keith Tippett (piano) and Louis Moholo (drums), giving as generously to this project as she has to theirs. It was hard choosing - as Francine regularly works closely with a myriad of tremendous musicians on worldwide stages, in a career that began in her teens.

"I wanted to sing ever since I was 8 and I really found my voice at about 16, in Martinique, when a chance meeting led to me joining a band. I was so excited, travelling in a car packed with instruments, I didn't think, I just felt it!" Francine met key musicians in Paris and then London as she followed her muse and made serendipity work for her

- alongside hard graft. Singing and then playing trumpet with 80's fusionists Dreamtime and Dedication Orchestra and following the courage of her convictions in a duo with double bassist Roberto Bellatalla forged vital connections - and opened up her creativity. "I was called to the Sardinia Festival in 1987 where we were recording an album where I had to improvise from a text. I just dried up in rehearsals and then, in the studio, I sang in a completely new way, influenced by the trumpet, and astounded even myself. That was it - I loved it!"

Well placed chance led to Luce's incandescent work with Louis Moholo's 'Viva La Black' "He heard me singing at a party in 1988 and said he had found the voice he would need when he was ready" (a magic 7 years later). Her collaboration with

Lester Bowie carries an amazing story. "I rushed to Paris to hear him in '86, taking my luggage into the concert. For the finale his band paraded through the audience. I couldn't resist sneaking my trumpet out of my bag and playing from my seat. Of course he saw me and made me lead the parade back to the stage - and pointed at me to play the final note." The contact came to fruition 12 years later (another of Francine's magical numbers) at the '98 Oris Jazz Festival.

When we spoke, Francine Luce was preparing for her South Bank album launch whilst looking forward to headlining at the Martinique Jazz Festival and singing with the Ben Park (classical) ensemble on October 24/25 in London. I was lucky to catch her!

Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

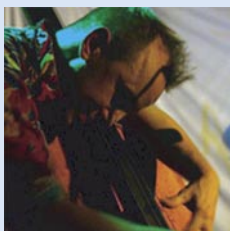
BAND BIOGRAPHIES



Tsivi Sharett - Pianist

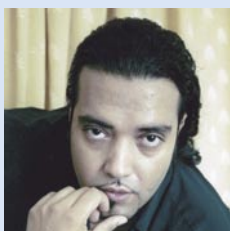
London based Israeli pianist and composer Sharett subtly brings together her own traditions, classical music, Jazz, Latin and much more - The guardian (London).

Born in Israel, Tsivi studied conducting at the Rubinstein in Tel Aviv. Currently based in London Tsivi enjoys a diverse career as a composer, arranger and a pianist. She performs with her own band, the TS Ensemble at well known venues in London such as the Jazz Café, the South Bank Festival and much more.



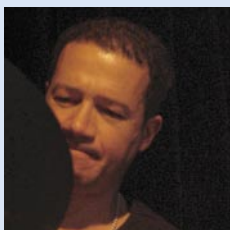
John Edwards - Double Bass

Since taking up the bass, Edwards has always been involved with a wide diversity of musical styles and situations. At home with composed and improvised music, he is one of the busiest musicians on the London scene. Probably best known for his work with Evan Parker, John Butcher, Sonny Murray, Peter Brotzmann etc, he has been in groups such as GOD, B-Shops for the Poor, while at present continues to collaborate with electro-acoustic composer John Wall, Spring Heel Jack, Fundamental and play in groups with Louis Moholo, Lol Coxhill, Ingrid Laubrock, Charles Hayward, to name a few...he is also to perform a series of solo concerts later in 2006. He features on over 70 recordings.



Satin Singh - Percussion - Tabla

Since starting his professional career in London, Satin has studied and played a wide percussive instruments such as Congas, Timbale, Djembe, Tabla, Darabuka and much more. He has also worked in musical forms from Africa, Cuba, Brazil and India and a variety of styles such as Latin/Jazz/Funk/Dance and Popular music. He has been on the international scene since 1985 working with Steve Wonder, Nina Simone, Escoffery sisters, Roy Ayer, Roberto Pla and his Latin Jazz Ensemble, Dave Valentine, Mervin Africa, Jazz Warriors, Denis Batiste, Michael Pettruchini and many more. He appeared at all the major festivals in the UK such as Glastonbury, Reading and the Virgin festivals.



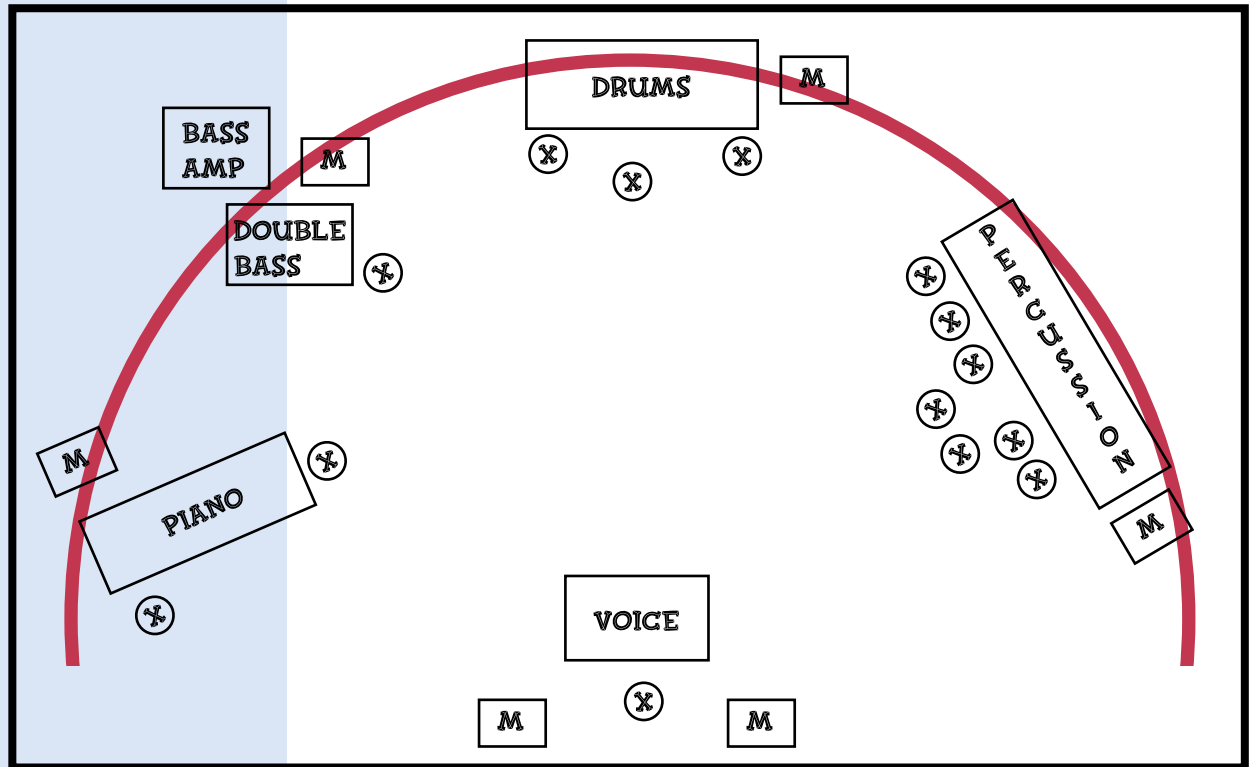
Mark Sanders - Drums

Since the mid-'90s, Mark Sanders has been one of the most active drummers on the England Jazz scene, "Jazz" encompassing everything from free improvisation to Jah Wobble's dub excursions. Sanders is gifted with a superior technique paired with acute listening abilities. Add to these flexibilities and a lot of enthusiasm, it's easy to understand why he became the favourite drummer of so many artists. Despite his impressive discography (appearance on over more 50 titles), Sanders is a member of the London Improvisers Orchestra and has worked with Steve Beresford, Simon H. Fell, Georg Graewe, Evan Parker, John Edwards, Vervan Weston, Paul Rogers, Elton Dean, Dudu Pukwana, the Chris Batchelor/Steve Buckley quartet and many more.

Francine Luce

Songs and Sounds

STAGE PLAN & TECH SPEC



Voice

1 x vocal mic (minimum spec SM58), 1 x double bass stool

Piano

1 x grand piano, standard mic set, 1 x vocal mic

Double bass

1 x bass amp, 1 x vocal mic

Percussion

3 x mics for tabla, 2 x mics for conga, 2 x mics for toy effects

Drums

1 x jazz drum kit 18" bass drum, 12" tom, 14" floor tom, 14" wood snare.
Hi Hat and Bass drum pedals, 3 x cymbal stands,
Drum stool
1 x standard mic set.