

# Biography

## ***Chris McNulty: vocalist –composer***

**Chris McNulty** has been moving audiences since her emergence on the international jazz scene in 1985. With a touch of Sarah, a hint of Ella, and a whole lot of vibe, McNulty is blessed with an exquisite instrument. She combines a rich, expressive voice with a deep sense of swing, a natural feel for the blues and an impressive ability to improvise that comes straight from the heart. She has been hailed by critics in the US as an immense talent whose vocalizing is fearless and composing peerless (*Jazz Times, USA, Jan 2007*), and a rare find among jazz singers. In the UK she has recently been hailed as one of the foremost vocalist-composers on the international jazz scene with a voice of serene beauty, striking veracity and compelling emotional fervency (*Jazz Wise, UK, Jan 2007*). In her native Australia, as a superb jazz vocalist (*West Australian, May 2005*) who melds the sounds of jazz, blues, pop and funk into an intensely musical style with a highly professional delivery. On recordings and in live performance, she spontaneously reconstructs melodies while retaining the essence of the original lyrics. Her repertoire ranges from classic Gershwin and Porter standards to Miles Davis classics and Burt Bacharach chestnuts with an ever increasing focus on her original compositions and lyrics.

Increasingly acknowledged by musicians, peers and critics alike as a jazz vocalist-composer with a unique vision, boundless creative energy and a distinctive style of her own. McNulty's risk-taking, fluid and powerful emotional approach, support, but never compromise her musical sensibilities. As both vocalist and composer, McNulty breaks new ground by simultaneously reinforcing and re-defining the boundaries for jazz vocals. In short, she is a consummate musician with great pitch and control "capable of injecting emotion, pathos, irony & meaning into her work, a gift that few singers can lay claim to." (*George Carroll, The Musicians Ombudsman, Aug 2006*). Her compositions have been hailed as rich harmonically, melodically and lyrically and well worthy of the company they keep along side the great standards she continues to interpret and explore.

McNulty first visited **New York City in 1985 and settled there in 1988 after being awarded an International Study Grant from the Australia Council.** Since then Chris has garnered further accolades from critics, jazz musicians and fans alike, as well as collaborating and performing with some of the finest musicians on the jazz scene today including: **Gary Bartz, Paul Bollenback, Gary Thomas, Mulgrew Miller, Ugonna Okegwo, John Hicks, Frank Wess, Ingrid Jensen, Terri-Lyne Carrington, Tim Garland, Tom Lellis, Billy Hart, Ed Howard, Jeff Ballard, Dave Pietro, Joe Locke, Peter Leitch, Tineke Postma, James Genus, Matt Wilson, Jeff "Tain" Watts, David "Fathead" Newman, George Mraz, Kenny Washington, Steve Wilson, Joel Frahm, Gary Versace, Dean Johnson, Ted Rosenthal, David Budway, Harvey S and Tony Reedus.**

Chris's debut recording in the States, *Waltz For Debby* (Discovery 1990), received outstanding reviews in several publications and features the **official published lyric by Chris** of the great **Miles Davis classic, "Blue in Green."** In 1994 Chris was also honored to be selected as one of the six exceptional new jazz singers on the New York scene to be featured on the Venus recording, *"Big Apple Voices"*. She has gone on to record several CD's since then, *A Time for Love* (Amosaya 1996), *I Remember You* (Elefant Dreams/Mop Top 2004, *Dance Delicioso* (Elefant Dreams 2005)

and her most recently released *Whispers the Heart* (Elefant Dreams 2006). Her development over this period of time from lyricist to full fledged composer has been duly noted in major press reviews and articles.

In between raising her only son Sam, Chris has managed to maintain an active profile and presence on the international scene. Her touring schedule has taken her to all four corners of the globe and includes appearances at **BAM's presentation of the first Australian Arts Festival** held at the Brooklyn Academy of Arts, Brooklyn, NYC in 2001. She toured Russia with Paul Bollenback in 2002, 2003 and appeared in 2004 for the very first **St Petersburg Jazz Festival**. Their magnetic and captivating performances have led to ever increasing festival dates around the world. Following the release of her highly acclaimed *Dance Delicioso*, Chris returned from successful festival appearances in both the UK and Ireland including the **Brecon Festival in Wales** and the **Kilkenny Arts Festival in Ireland**. Along with national radio features throughout the States, UK, Ireland and Europe, her music has also been a major feature in Australia on ABC's nationally broadcast program, "The Nightly Planet." *Dance Delicioso* and *Whispers the Heart* have received major attention in the press and on radio world wide, both making it onto the pre-nomination ballot for a Grammy nomination the last 2 years respectively. On **Paul Bollenback's 6<sup>th</sup> release *Brightness of Being***, released March 2006, Chris' vocalese work is featured amongst a stellar cast of jazz luminaries including David "Fathead" Newman, Tim Garland, Gary Thomas, Terri-Lyne Carrington, James Genus and Ari Hoenig.

**McNulty's 6<sup>th</sup> release** in the States, *Whispers the Heart*, features several new outstanding original works and arrangements including a string quartet written by Chris, along with featured guests including jazz great **Frank Wess, Ingrid Jensen, Paul Bollenback** (Paul also shares executive and co-producing credits), **Ed Howard, Dave Pietro, Tineke Postma, Gary Versace, Matt Wilson, Rogerio Boccato** and **Montez Coleman**. *Whispers the Heart* was recently included in the **Jazz Journalists Association (JJA) Critics list of Top Ten picks of 2006** by **JJA critic, Nancy Barell**. The recording also remained in the Top 10 on major global Internet radio [www.radioio.com](http://www.radioio.com) during October and November 2006.

An interview with Chris appears in the 2006 fall issue of **Jazz Improv Magazine**, which can be read on line at [www.elefantdreams.com](http://www.elefantdreams.com). Her Guest Clinician article "**On the Road**" is featured in **Jazz Ed Magazine** in their January 2007 issue. Chris also makes regular appearances at Mike's Master Classes on-line at [www.mikesmasterclasses.com](http://www.mikesmasterclasses.com)

Chris McNulty has lived in NYC since 1988. She maintains an active touring schedule. Her 2006 -2007 calendar includes festival and club appearances in **Australia, UK, Ireland, Europe** and **Russia**. Chris will also be on tour on the **West Coast, USA in mid-April** and will be making a **NYC appearance at the Kitano on March 22nd, 2007** with her quartet.