

FRANCESCA TANKSLEY & DREAMCALLER PRODUCTIONS

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"A vivid presence" – Nat Hentoff

"Ms. Tanksley reworked the vocabulary of McCoy Tyner as if she had taken just one small aspect of his style and developed it into a full language. She gave the music color, her harmonies and chording adding surprise to the performance." – Peter Watrous, New York Times

Francesca Tanksley surprises. The internationally-acclaimed jazz pianist and composer breaks through traditional expectations with the power of her musical vision. Acknowledged as a fine soloist, composer, and accompanist with such notable groups as the Billy Harper Quintet and the Erica Lindsay Quintet, she has performed throughout Europe, East and Southeast Asia, Scandinavia and South America as well as in the United States, and appears on numerous CD releases of both groups. Her compositional talent is featured on two of the Billy Harper Quintet's CDs, as well as on her own recently released CD.

Other leading musicians with whom Francesca Tanksley has performed include Howard Johnson, David Newman, Cecil Payne, Nick Brignola, Slide Hampton, Sheila Jordan, Jay Clayton, Clifford Jordan and Charles Davis. She has been a featured artist on Marian McPartland's widely acclaimed National Public Radio series *Piano Jazz*, and appears in the documentary *Women In Jazz* by Burrill Crohn. Ms. Tanksley has been noted in the books *American Women In Jazz* by Sally Plaxin, and in *Madam Jazz* by Leslie Gourse.

In addition to being an acclaimed accompanist and composer, Ms. Tanksley also leads the Francesca Tanksley Trio, and has recently produced her first CD entitled *Journey*, which features her original compositions and includes colleagues from the Billy Harper Quintet drummer Newman Taylor Baker and bassist Clarence Seay.

Francesca Tanksley was born in Italy as a U.S. citizen and grew up in Munich, Germany. She began studying piano at the age of seven, and at sixteen she attended Berklee College of Music in Boston to study jazz piano and composition. After her studies at Berklee she returned to Munich and began her professional career performing with various European jazz groups. She then moved to New York City and joined Melba Liston's group, Melba Liston & Co., appearing at major jazz clubs and festivals in the U.S., including the Kool Jazz Festival at Carnegie Hall with Dizzy Gillespie. Soon thereafter she became an integral member of the Billy Harper Quintet, as well as the Erica Lindsay Quintet.

Ms. Tanksley holds a Master's Degree in Music from Queens College, and is the recipient of the Graduating Master's Award, the Eubie Blake Scholarship Award and the ASCAP Louis Armstrong Composer's Scholarship Award, 1995. She has conducted jazz workshops at numerous colleges, including the University of Southern California at Santa Cruz, Hampton University, Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute, and Bard College. Ms. Tanksley serves as faculty at New School University's Jazz and Contemporary Music Program in New York City.

Francesca Tanksley has played the following venues, among many others:

U.S.

Carnegie Hall, Kool Jazz Festival, JVC Jazz Festival, New York - Iridium, New York - Sweet Basil, Detroit Jazz Festival, San Francisco Stern Grove Jazz Festival, Oakland - Yoshi's , Delaware Jazz Festival, Baltimore Jazz In Cool Places, Atlanta Jazz Festival, Houston Jazz Festival, Chicago - The Green Mill, Lake George Jazz Festival, Woodstock FM Jazz Coalition, Philadelphia – The Painted Bride

International

Jazz Festivals/Clubs in Finland, Norway, Holland, Yugoslavia, Japan, Canada, Poland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland
U.S. State Department tours of South America and Southeast Asia

Recordings:

With the Francesca Tanksley Trio

Journey - 2002, DreamCaller, DC7168

With the Billy Harper Quintet

Soul Of An Angel – 2000 Metropolitan, MRI 120

If Our Hearts Could Only See – 1997 DIW, 931

Somalia – 1994 Omagatoki, SC-7107

Live On Tour In The Far East, Volumes I, II, and III – Steeplechase, 1992 SCCD31311, 1993 SCCD 31321

Destiny Is Yours - 1990 Steeplechase, SCCD 31260

With the Erica Lindsay Quartet

Dreamer - 1989 Candid, CCD 79040

With the Blue Jade Trio

Night Songs – 1995 Alpha, ALCB 3070

Recorded Compositions:

"Dance In The Question" – Billy Harper - *Destiny Is Yours, Live On Tour In The Far East, Vol. I*

"Dear Earth", "United", "Prayer" - Tim Strong – *Dear Earth: Tim Strong in New Zealand* – Hart Records Corp.