

1-814.482.0010
KATE SMITH PROMOTION

 KateSmithPromotion@gmail.com

GOING FOR ADDS 5/16/2018
(ALSO ARTIST'S BIRTHDAY)
FILE: JAZZ VOCALIST
RECOMMENDED TRACKS
1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9
 www.KateSmithPromotion.com

LAURA WALLS STORY-TIME LINE
 1982: International Muscial Theater Star
 1994: European Jazz Vocal Sensation
 1999: BA Degree from Roosevelt U.
 2006: MA Degree from Columbia College
 2007: College Professorships / Mentoring
 2012: Returns to Chicago Musical Theater
 2014: Misfortune Threatens Singing Career
 2016: Full Recovery / Return to Singing
 2017: Re-Discovery of 1994 Master Tapes

LAURA WALLS
SONIC PORTRAITS JAZZ DEBUT
OLORI LIVE at the North Sea Jazz Festival

"Olori" is a Yoruba name that denotes leadership. An African Elder conferred the title Olori or "Queen Mother" upon vocalist/actor Laura Walls early in her career . During 1994 Ms. Walls adopted the name for sometime, but subsequently, as an actor, reverted back to the use of her birth name. Olori as used here only as a part of the historic album title, which corresponds to the artist name listing on the North Sea Jazz Festival program at the time (it is not the name of her group).

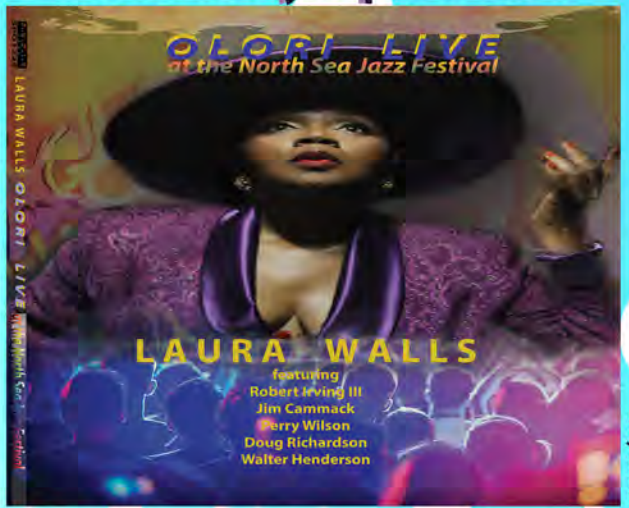
Vocalist, Laura Walls under the artistic pseudonym, "Olori" performed at the prestigious North Sea Jazz Festival in Den Haag, Holland on Friday, July 8, 1994 and Saturday July 9, 1994 inspiring two-standing ovations each night to sold out crowds. This recording is from the second night's performance. An All-star band led by Robert Irving III (pianist/arranger/nine-year Miles Davis collaborator) actually featured two prominent drummers: Terri-Lyne Carrington (on the first night) and Perry Wilson (The Crusaders and Sonny Rollins) on the second, trumpeter/Flugel-Horn player, Walter Henderson (Jack McDuff, Buddy Guy, Steve Coleman's Inner Drive) Canadian saxophonist/flutist/film actor, Doug Richardson who played the opening theme for the Bill Cosby Show.

In the dark quiet room, Irving's gentle piano intro set up the entrance of an unseen, beautifully melodic sounding voice breaking through the loud silence. A glimmer of light revealed Walls (Olori) on a cordless microphone behind the audience. The spotlight followed, embellishing her face, growing into a fiery ball of light that created the illusion of magnetically thrusting her towards the stage while the audience gasped, clapped and cheered. Ms. Walls majestically sauntered onto that massive stage, interacting with the audience as if they were old friends.

It was a hot summery night in Holland as Wall's sweet and passionate delivery of the rubato intro of George Gershwin's classic "...hush little baby, don't cry little baby because your mama and daddy are standing by," crescendoed into a festive gospel groove with Musical Director Robert Irving III's spirited-funky jazz arrangement of "Summertime". The connection between the artist and audience felt purely electrifying as Ms. Walls energetically took them to church. A memorable musical journey ensued that clearly marked the arrival of a special world-class artist onto an important international stage. At one point Ms. Walls sat on the edge of the stage creating a heartfelt intimacy with the audience who were predominantly Dutch, German, Austrian with a contingency of French, Swiss and Scandinavian. If music is considered the "universal language" crossing all barriers regardless of color or creed, Ms. Walls had mastered that theme and connected with them thoroughly. She recalls, "They were filled with joy, smiles, and tears; it was enchanting and their honest, open appreciation was felt deeply in my Core...it was like love at first sight."

Her performances at Mondriann Zaal Auditorium rated par-excellence as her voice loomed large with full-bodied soul and hints of classical phrasing. Although, she remained virtually unknown to American audiences outside of her hometown Chicago in 1994, Walls was not an absolute stranger to European connoisseurs of North American artistry. Three months prior to this performance, Rod Echlos of WHBK Jazz Radio in Chicago wrote; after hearing a demo of her studio album, 'Free As A Child' "I feel that this project rates as one of the top two vocal projects I've heard this year.—It stands along-side of Dee Dee Bridgewater's' new CD...it's refreshing to hear some new vocal repertoire." March 1994 . But, after such high accolades and the magnanimous European performances, why would the release of this music be delayed for some 24-long years? Every great back-story starts from the beginning: (Continues on back)

**"She Made History 24-Years Ago
 ...Now History Repeats Itself"**



SP11225

**Recorded Saturday, July 9, 1994
 at Mondriann Zaal Auditorium
 North Sea Jazz Festival
 Den Haag, Holland**

Laura Walls (aka Olori) Vocals
Robert Irving III- Piano/Arranger/M.D.
Jim Cammack- Acoustic Bass
Perry Wilson-Drums
Doug Richardson- Tenor Saxophone/Flute
Walter Henderson-Trumpet/Flugel-Horn

UP SWING
 LATIN
 SWING
 SWING
 BALLAD
 BLUES
 LATIN
 BALLAD
 UP SWING

01. SUMMERTIME (6:25)
 Composers: George Gershwin, Ira Gershwin, DuBose Heyward, Dorothy Kuhns-Heyward
 Published by: FRANKIE G. SONGS, NOKAWI MUSIC
 DUBOSE AND DOROTHY HEYWARD MEMORIAL FUND PUB/ASCAP
 IRA GERSHWIN MUSIC/(NO PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AFFILIATION)
SOLOISTS: Robert Irving III - Piano, Doug Richardson - Tenor Saxophone

02. IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING (6:21)
 Composers: Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II
 Published by: WILLIAMSON MUSIC CO./ASCAP
SOLOISTS: Walter Henderson - Trumpet

03. NATURE BOY (6:31)
 Composer: AHBEZ EDEN
 Published by: GOLDEN WORLD/ASCAP
SOLOISTS: Doug Richardson - Flute

04. KILLING ME SOFTLY WITH HIS SONG (5:11)
 Composers: Charles Fox, Norman Gimbel
 Published by: RODALI MUSIC, NEW THUNDER MUSIC CO/BMI
SOLOISTS: Doug Richardson - Tenor Saxophone

05. FOGGY DAY (4:05)
 Composers: George Gershwin, Ira Gershwin
 Published by: FRANKIE G. SONGS, NOKAWI MUSIC, W B MUSIC CORP/ASCAP,
 IRA GERSHWIN MUSIC/(NO PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AFFILIATION)
SOLOISTS: Walter Henderson - Muted Trumpet, Perry Wilson - Drums

06. FALL, AGAIN (4:57)
 Composers: Wayne Shorter, Laura Walls, Robert Irving III
 Published by: MIYAKO MUSIC/BMI
SOLOISTS: Walter Henderson - Flugel Horn

07. CALL IT STORMY MONDAY (BUT TUESDAY IS JUST AS BAD) (5:59)
 Composer: Aaron Walker (aka T-Bone Walker)
 Published by: LORD AND WALKER PUBLISHING, GREGMARK MUSIC INC/BMI
SOLOISTS: Doug Richardson - Saxophone, Robert Irving III - Piano, Jim Cammack - Bass

08. CARNIVAL (BLACK ORPHEUS THEME) (6:46)
 Composers: Luiz Bonfá, Antônio Maria, Hugo Peretti, Luigi Creatore, George David Weiss
 Published by: ANNE RACHEL MUSIC, MUSIC SALES CORP, ABILENE MUSIC INC /ASCAP
SOLOISTS:

09. QUIET STORM (4:53)
 Composer: Laura Walls
 Published by: OLORI MUSIC /BMI
SOLOISTS: Robert Irving III - Piano, Walter Henderson - Flugel Horn

10. WATCH WHAT HAPPENS (4:53)
 Composer: Michel Legrand, Norman Gimbel, Marc Raymond Louis Jacques Demy
 Published by: NEW THUNDER MUSIC CO, UNIVERSAL SONGS OF POLYGRAM
 INTERNATIONAL INC/BMI
SOLOISTS: Walter Henderson - Muted Trumpet, Robert Irving III - Piano

SONIC PORTRAITS JAZZ
<https://www.sonicportraitsjazz.com/>

Available on **cd baby**
 Available on **iTunes**
 Available at **amazon**

CATALOG # SPJ1225

 6 72713 26121 6

THE BACK-STORY OF LAURA WALLS' RETURN TO HER MUSIC ROOTS

Her mother, also named Laura Walls, played piano for legendary gospel pioneer, Mahalia Jackson. *Mama Laura* first put young Ms. Walls in front of an audience at the age of six at Mount Olive Baptist Church in Phoenix Illinois. Standing on a milk-crate in a pink chiffon dress, little Ms. Walls floored the audience with her confident and spirited rendition of the gospel classic, "It's In My Heart." For the record, this is a melodically sophisticated song for a child to sing. By the age of 27, Ms. Walls toured the world, convincingly, portraying Billy Holiday in the Kuumba Theater production of "In The House of The Blues" garnering front-page rave reviews in Montreal, Canada, Osaka, Tokyo, and Kyoto, Japan; winning several Jeff Awards. Ms. Walls subsequently enjoyed a fruitful decade as a star in Chicago dramatic and musical theater, while also doing voice-overs along with on and off-camera work on numerous radio and television commercials; again reaping coveted awards. All this transpired as she persevered as a single mom in raising her son, Maurice. By 1992 Laura Walls found herself on a six-month run at the exclusive Monty Carlo Sporting Club on the French Riviera opening for the likes of Shirley Bassey, Tina Turner, Ray Charles, Paul Anka, Blood, Sweat and Tears, Kool and the Gang, Riccardo Cocciante, and Barry White.

Two years later, just a few months prior to her performance at the North Sea Jazz Festival in 1994, Laura Walls recorded a studio album entitled, "Free As A Child". This album represented a culmination of her musical experiences up until that time. It consisted of original music by Ms. Walls collaborating with project producer/arranger Robert Irving III along with new songs by musicians featured on the recording including drummer, Terri Lyne Carrington and trumpeter, Walter Henderson. Jim Cammack, known for his long tenure with Ahmad Jamal, played bass and James Perkins (Bobby Lyle/Anita Baker) played saxophone.

While waiting for the balance of the slightly over-budgeted project, someone from the studio recorded over-top of the priceless 32-track digital master tape. The group went on to play the North Sea Jazz festival that summer with hopes of being able to secure a recording contract with a major label and then re-record a couple of the music selections with a larger budget. This never happened as the music industry began to drastically shift focus away from jazz-- as mergers, consolidations and mp3 file sharing would soon start to undercut profitability.

Just after returning from the North Sea, the life and career Walls also shifted as she received a fortuitous offer for a full Jazz Voice scholarship from Roosevelt University. This led to a decade long journey that includes her suffering of a minor stroke in her third year of college the changing of her major, the subsequent earning of a BA in Communications from Roosevelt in 2000; later adding a Master of Arts Degree from Columbia College in 2006. She transitioned into work as a college professor while continuing to periodically take on roles as an Equity actor, that included work alongside of Melissa Manchester and Paulette Washington (wife of Denzel). Complications from an automobile accident created new health challenges that culminated with vocal cord paresis or paralysis, which threatened to end her singing career in 2012. By early 2016, Ms. Walls attained full recovery with surgeries and vocal retraining, by learning to sing again; in a completely different way. The amazing results is that her singing range actually increased (although this required a reduction in velocity or volume projection). Miraculously, this coincided with the rediscovery of the stereo Digital Audio Tapes (DAT) of both the second night of her North Sea Jazz Festival performance (recorded 23-years earlier) and the stereo rough mix of the 1994 studio session, of which the master had been erased. Upon review, it was determined that both recordings withstood the test of time. The perfectionism and aesthetic scrutiny of Irving and Walls prompted them to (recently) re-record the tune "Cats Out On A Stroll" and the title track "Free As A Child" with the original musicians, along with a newly penned holiday song by Irving and Walls that everyone is very excited about! The highly anticipated studio album, "Free As A Child" by Laura Walls promises to be an exciting and coveted 4th Quarter 2018 release on the Sonic Portraits Jazz label:

Street Date- September 10, 2018

