

MOONDANCER

at the Thomas Center

Autumn in New York

- 1 Tenor Madness (*Rollins*) 3:10
- 2 Autumn in New York (*Duke*) 6:54
- 3 Someday My Prince Will Come (*Morey/Churchill*) 5:27
- 4 In a Sentimental Mood (*Ellington*) 6:21
- 5 Wave (*Jobim*) 7:11
- 6 Gentle Rain (*Bonfi/Dubey*) 5:19
- 7 'Round Midnight (*Monk/Williams & Hanighen*) 5:48
- 8 Triste (*Jobim*) 6:13
- 9 Moondance (*Morrison*) 6:37

The band:

Cathy DeWitt: Vocals, Piano
Dave Sloane: Tenor Saxophone
David Ottenberg: Bass
Rob Rothschild: Drums

Featuring:

Hank Herring (2-5) and Frank Sullivan (7) on Piano

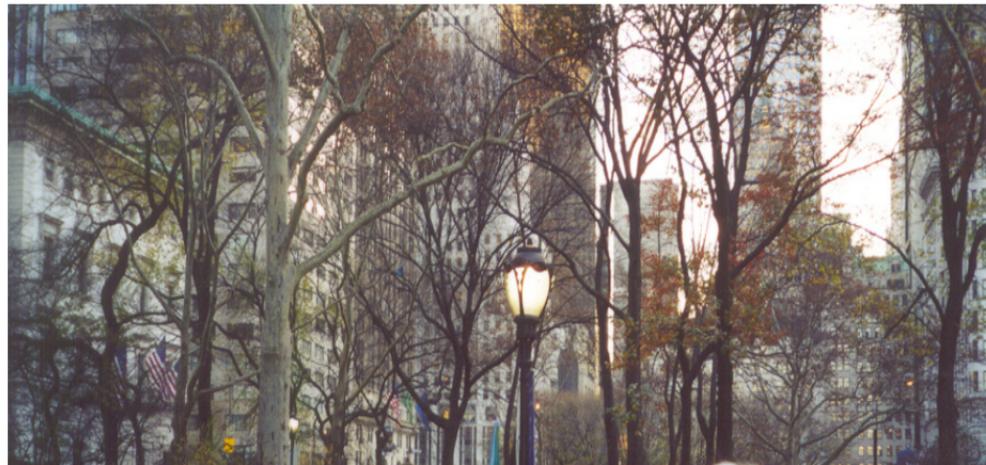
Recorded Live at the Gainesville Friends of Jazz & Blues
Holiday Concert, December 11, 2001

Recorded by Jay Klein

Mixed by Rob Rothschild & Jay Klein

'Round Midnight recorded October 4, 1987 by Will Kinaly

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MOONDANCER

with Cathy DeWitt

Autumn in New York

MoonDancer: 1981-2002

The original MoonDancer was formed in the early eighties by guitarist Charlie Bush and pianist/vocalist Cathy DeWitt. The first drummers were Michael Derry, Billy Bowker and Lenny Kesl. Dave Hugel was the original bass player. His friend Clayton recorded the band for the first time—on reel to reel tape! - at Richenbacher's (where Kesl once fell off the stage while playing drums and waving to a friend coming in the door). Paula Tyner soon took over the bass duties, and played with the band for a long time, at the Island Hotel in Cedar Key, the Holiday Inn, and the Dutch Pantry's Kettle & Keg Bar.

Nick DeCarlis started sitting in with the band early on, adding his spiralling coronet solos. He became a fifth member for many gigs, and joined their live broadcast debut on Barry Sides' WUFT-FM show, "Nothin' But the Blues". Bassist Ron Thomas and drummer Mark Blair were members of the band. Another bass player was John Bunnello, who later helped form the blues band Terraplane. John helped pick Charlie up from the floor after his chair with wheels rolled off the stage at the Gainesville Country Club. (So far, no members of the current band have fallen offstage - knock on wood!) Charlie always welcomed other players, and he invited his young guitar students to sit in. Becky Palmer and Anna Moo were among the guest singers.

After Charlie died (on the day that Reagan got re-elected in 1984), Cathy kept the band going, trying to maintain Charlie's openness to jammers. MoonDancer was the core band for the jazz jams at Don Puckett's Gazebo Gardens for quite a while. Allen Ash and Ed LeGare sometimes played in the core band. Many great players would show up for these jams, including pianist Frank Sullivan, who always came by after his gig at the nearby Holiday Inn, and popular singers Janet Rucker and Robbie (Purdue) Blake. Guitar wizard Mark Fox was barely twenty-one the first time he showed up for a jam, and he became the guitar player for several years. Even after moving out of town, he participated in many of the Charlie Bush Tribute Concerts that took place from 1985-1995. So did the late great Roland Burns, whose smooth alto sax stylings also graced the band during their ongoing gigs at Mr. Han's Restaurant and the Heritage Club.

The current version of MoonDancer is actually made up of alumni of the Rhythm & Blues Revue. The R&B Revue was a popular dance band around Gainesville during the eighties that featured a Blues Brothers act, a trio of women dancers/singers, and several amazing horn players who swung through town to study music at UF. The rhythm section consisted of drummer Rob Rothschild, bassist David Ottenberg, and Cathy DeWitt on keyboard. Guitarist Mike Cripe propelled and inspired the band with his burnin' blues solos. Master saxophonist and local legend Dave Sloane led the horn section, writing all the arrangements. These five players went through a brief stint as Love Tornado, named by Cathy's young son Jackson, before taking on the MoonDancer name around 1989. One of their first jazz gigs was the 1987 Charlie Bush Tribute Concert where, with pianist Frank Sullivan, they performed "Round Midnight" (as heard on this CD).

After Mike's move to Tampa in 1996, the band became a four-piece. Soon we got a weekly gig at Farah's, which lasted for three years. Like Charlie, Sloane and Ottenberg used the club as a performance venue for their better students. Along with locals and players passing through, a lot of young people sat in, including the Farahs' son Nick, a jammin' sax player at age twelve. Mike drove up from Tampa to play. Many players came by regularly, including Nick DeCarlis, Lenny Kesl, and pianist Hank Herring, who all played at the concert where this CD was recorded.



Even with this long history, this is actually MoonDancer's first CD. It was recorded at the Gainesville Friends of Jazz & Blues 2001 Holiday Concert at the Thomas Center by our friend Jay Klein (often a guest percussionist at Farah's). We hope you enjoy it!