

## CLAIRE MARTIN

### BIOGRAPHY

**CLAIRE MARTIN-** Deservedly described as 'England's most impressive female jazz artist' (*LA Times*) Claire Martin has forged a stellar career since signing with Linn Records, Britain's leading independent jazz label, in 1991; her debut recording *The Waiting Game* receiving superb reviews and listed as a *Times* 'Album of the Year'. She is the recipient of numerous awards, having won the prestigious BBC Jazz Award on four occasions.

Renowned for her unmistakably unique 'cool, burnished tone' (*New York Times*) and flawless technique, her choice of repertoire embraces material from many sources and influences, not always traditionally associated with the jazz canon. Her live sets move effortlessly between Waits, Jobim, and Costello via Arlen, Kern and Mercer with an 'awesome dexterity' (*New York Observer*).

She has performed onstage and in the studio with international artists such as Noel Gallagher, Mark Murphy, Curtis Stigers, Jamie Cullum and Kurt Elling, and supported legendary figures including James Brown and Tony Bennett, who lists her as one of his favourite singers.

A career milestone was her 2007 debut season at the legendary Oak Room of New York's Algonquin Hotel: a vitally important venue which has played a critical role in the careers of jazz and cabaret stars such as Harry Connick Jr, Peter Cincotti and Michael Feinstein. The season was a popular and critical smash, with Tony Bennett attending her first night, and leading critic Will Friedwald proclaiming her 'a world class performer'. She returned to the Algonquin in 2009 with Richard Rodney Bennett transferring their show 'Witchcraft' from a sellout run in London, proclaimed as 'world class' by *The Times*. The season achieved similar success in Manhattan where *The New York Observer* described it as 'wise and cultivated, satisfying, heavenly and fulfilling' and Rex Reed stated 'nobody does it like Claire Martin - a British singing sensation'.

Her recording output has been both prolific and critically acclaimed with 12 releases for Linn to date, including a live album at Ronnie Scotts, *Make This City Ours* (Linn) recorded in New York which shot to number 1 on the Gavin charts and remained there for 2 weeks (the only European artist to achieve this) and *He Never Mentioned Love* (Linn), her tribute to her musical hero, the late Shirley Horn. Linn Records recently re-released her first four studio albums in a deluxe package entitled *The Early Years Anthology* (Linn).

Her acclaimed long-running duo collaboration with legendary British composer, pianist and singer Sir Richard Rodney Bennett was captured in 2005's *When Lights Are Low*, and her latest recording *A Modern Art*, which she describes as 'a modern take on jazz singing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is due for release in September 2009 and features original material written or co-written by Claire.

In addition to her celebrated partnership with Richard Rodney Bennett, Claire performs regularly with her own ensemble, the Laurence Cottle Big Band, and also frequently with her long-time collaborator, vocalist Ian Shaw with whom she appeared at New York's Dizzy's Club Coca Cola as part of Lincoln Center's 2007 'Women In Jazz Festival'. She has embarked on a new collaboration with the conductor and arranger John Wilson and singer/saxophonist Curtis Stigers, celebrating the

work of John Lennon with new orchestral arrangement of his compositions. This project, which received a 15 minute standing ovation when it debuted with the Liverpool Symphony Orchestra, is set to be reprised in Dublin with the RTE Orchestra.

Since 2000 Claire has presented 'Jazz Line-up' on BBC3 where she regularly interviews jazz greats who have included Andre Previn, Mike Stern, Pat Metheney, Brad Mehldau, Tania Maria, Joe Locke, Joshua Redman, Diane Reeves and the late Michael Brecker

... 'A class act' *Jazz UK*

... 'A voice of pure quality' *The Sunday Times*

... "In an era when young jazz singers tend to sound far too much like their idols, there is no mistaking the voice of Claire Martin who combines a cool, burnished tone with the ear of a born musician". *The New York Times*