

new release

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ROB DIXON/STEVE ALLEE QUINTET ft. Amanda King and Derrick Gardner “STANDARDS DELUXE”

Saxophonist Rob Dixon and pianist Steve Allee co-lead a straight ahead jazz set on *Standards Deluxe* that has six features apiece for singer Amanda King and trumpeter Derrick Gardner. The spirited program is full of variety with Ms. King adding happiness to six standards while Gardner explores five Dixon originals plus “Caravan.”



Artist: ROB DIXON/STEVE ALLEE QUINTET
ft. Amanda King and Derrick Gardner
Title: STANDARDS DELUXE
Artist Website: www.indyjazzfoundation.org

Release Date: February 1, 2024
Label: Self Produced
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TRACK LISTING

1. **Caravan** (Duke Ellington) arr Rob Dixon 5:41
2. **Love for Sale** (Cole Porter) arr Steve Allee 5:35
3. **The Very Thought Of You** (Ray Noble) 5:31
4. **Sway** (Pablo Beltran Ruiz) arr Rob Dixon 3:23
5. **Our love is here to stay** (George Gershwin) arr Steve Allee 4:40
6. **On Green Dolphin Street** (Bronislaw Kaper) arr Rob Dixon 4:22
(Tracks 1–6 ft. Amanda King)
7. **One Hundred** (Rob Dixon) 5:36
8. **Lucky Number 7** (Rob Dixon) 5:27
9. **Mind Mirror** (Rob Dixon) 5:30
10. **If We Must Die** (Rob Dixon) 6:06
11. **Flat Tire Blues** (Rob Dixon) 3:37
12. **Caravan** (Duke Ellington) arr Steve Allee 5:38
(Tracks 7–12 ft. Derrick Gardner)

Produced by Rob Dixon; Executive Producer: The Indianapolis Jazz Foundation

MUSICIANS: Rob Dixon - Tenor and soprano saxophone, Steve Allee - Piano, Amanda King - Vocals, Derrick Gardner - Trumpet, Nick Tucker - Bass, Greg Artry - Drums (tracks 1–6), Kenny Phelps - Drums (tracks 7–12)

Tenor and soprano-saxophonist Rob Dixon and pianist Steve Allee have long been two of the top jazz musicians based in the Midwest. They first recorded together in 2008 on the pianist's *Dragonfly* album.

On *Standards Deluxe*, Dixon and Allee co-lead a group that also includes bassist Nick Tucker and either Greg Artry or Kenny Phelps on drums. The first half of the program also features singer Amanda King while the second part has the group becoming a quintet with the addition of trumpeter Derrick Gardner.

Amanda King's warm and expressive voice stars on an atmospheric version of “Caravan,” a swinging “Love For Sale,” “The Very Thought Of You” (which is taken at a perfect medium-slow tempo), the always-catchy “Sway,” a jubilant “Our Love Is Here To Stay,” and “On Green Dolphin Street.” Dixon's tenor is an equal partner on four of the numbers, at times recalling John Coltrane's playing with Johnny Hartman. He switches to soprano on “Caravan” and Allee, who is a masterful accompanist throughout this set, is well showcased on “Our Love Is Here To Stay.”

Derrick Gardner turns the group into a classic hard bop quintet during six instrumentals, five of which are Dixon originals. The relaxed but fiery “One Hundred” is followed by “Lucky Number 7” with the latter being a medium-tempo strut worthy of the Jazz Messengers, inspiring some particularly fiery solos. The somber and purposeful “Mind Mirror,” a hard-swinging “If We Must Die,” and the blazing “Flat Tire Blues” are full of fire and inventive solos. *Standards Deluxe* concludes with a second version of “Caravan,” one with a fresh arrangement and passionate interplay by the two horns.

Rob Dixon was born in Baltimore and grew up in Atlanta, studied at Hampton University (undergraduate) and Indiana University (for his graduate studies), and spent important years in New York. He worked with Illinois Jacquet's big band for four years, was part of Tana Reid, and freelanced with many top musicians. Since 2003, he has been an important part of the Indianapolis jazz scene, working with the Cleveland Heritage Jazz Orchestra and the Buselli-Wallarab Jazz Orchestra, performing with the late organist Melvin Rhyne, directing the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra Youth Jazz Ensemble, and also recording with Derrick Gardner's Jazz Prophets, Mark Buselli, Mike Clark, and the Headhunters in addition to leading three albums of his own.

Steve Allee, who has been based in Indianapolis since the early 1970s, toured with the Buddy Rich Orchestra and has also worked with Slide Hampton, James Moody, Bob Mintzer, Randy Brecker, Phil Woods, Curtis Fuller, Tim Hagans, Ira Sullivan, Milt Hinton, and Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson to name a few. Allee has also composed music for films and television shows and led albums ranging from big band outings to features at the head of his trio.

Amanda King started her career as an actress in Louisville before switching to singing and moving to San Francisco in 2000. She has since starred in her shows “It's About Damn Time,” “Chanteuse” (recording a CD with the same name), and “A Salute To Ella: The Early Years.” Derrick Gardner has worked with the Count Basie Orchestra, Frank Foster's Loud Minority Band, Harry Connick's Orchestra, the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, George Gee, Craig Bailey and Stefan Harris in addition to leading his sextet, the Jazz Prophets.

Standards Deluxe is a well-rounded and consistently exciting set of vintage songs and new originals by Rob Dixon and Steve Allee that will be of strong interest to lovers of swinging modern jazz.

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