

## CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED JAZZ PRODIGY VISITS AUSTRALIA FOR FIRST TIME

Brisbane Powerhouse presents  
**GRETCHEN PARLATO**

*"...she's a singer with a deep, almost magical connection to the music...  
Every note is expressive, powerful, and pretty."* Jazz Legend, Herbie Hancock

*"...Gretchen Parlato knows how to play the same instrument that Frank Sinatra played."* Wayne Shorter

### WINNER 2004 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocals Competition

Hailed by critics as a female Frank Sinatra, winner of the prestigious Thelonious Monk International Jazz vocal competition **Gretchen Parlato** will perform at Brisbane Powerhouse on Wednesday 6 February, 2008.

Having performed with the likes of Dianne Reeves, Oscar Castro-Neves, Lionel Loueke, Herbie Hancock and Dave Holland, **Gretchen** is renowned for her ethereal sound and fusion of jazz, Brazilian and African elements.

**Gretchen** became the first vocalist to be accepted into the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance in 2001, selected by a panel of judges including Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Terence Blanchard.

When she moved to New York in 2003, **Gretchen** created a buzz in prestigious jazz spots such as Blue Note, Dizzy's Jazz at Lincoln Centre, Jazz Gallery, Sweet Rhythm, 55 Bar, Fat Cat and the Knitting Factory.

Attracting critical acclaim for her debut album, which was named #5 Best Progressive Jazz CD of 2005 by Jazz Nation, **Gretchen** says her aim as a singer is to "serve the music".

"I really just want to make beautiful music - music that people will listen to and feel something. Because the music that touches me the most always evokes some kind of a mood and creates a vibe. And that's what I'm looking for too," Gretchen said.

**Gretchen** has featured at major jazz festivals including the 2002 St. Lucia Jazz Festival, 2002 Umbria Jazz Festival, 2003 Tri-C Jazz Festival, 2003 Taos Jazz and Latin Festival and the 2007 La Villette Jazz Festival.

Numerous recording credits include guest vocals for: Terence Blanchard's Blue Note album, *Flow*; the film soundtrack for *Seeing Other People* (2004); *Amazon Moon*, an album of Mike Stoller's music arranged by Brazilian pianist, Guilherme Vergueiro, and; Walt Disney's, *A World of Happiness*.

**Gretchen** has sung with DJ's such as Cut Chemist (Jurassic 5, Ozomatli) and DJ Khalil of Self Scientific on their 2005 album "Change."

For one night only Brisbane audiences will have the opportunity to experience the magic of **Gretchen Parlato** as she scats, coos and leaps through complex tempo and rhythmic shifts.

-ENDS-

<b>Date</b>	<b>Wednesday 6 February, 2008</b>
<b>Time</b>	7:30pm
<b>Venue</b>	Powerhouse Theatre
<b>Tickets</b>	\$32, \$24 side galleries
<b>Bookings</b>	07 3358 8600 or <a href="http://brisbanepowerhouse.org">brisbanepowerhouse.org</a>

For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact  
**Brisbane Powerhouse PR Manager, Olivia Guglielmino**  
p 07 3358 8671 m 0409 187 289 f 07 3358 8611 e [oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org)  
or **Brisbane Powerhouse Marketing & Publicity Coordinator, Dorothy Farrell**  
p 07 3358 8643 m 0423 463 278 f 07 3358 8611 e [dorothyf@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:dorothyf@brisbanepowerhouse.org)

# BRISBANE POWERHOUSE ARTS

## BIOGRAPHY – GRETCHEN PARLATO [gretchenparlato.com](http://gretchenparlato.com)

"The first thing you notice about Gretchen Parlato is that she's a singer with a deep, almost magical connection to the music," says jazz legend Herbie Hancock. "She takes a lot of chances with her understated style, and it works. Every note is expressive, powerful, and pretty. And most important, her heart is in the right place."

Gretchen's petite bearing and vocal enchantments evoked another famed, spell-casting pixie for one reviewer, who called Gretchen's 2002 performance with Herbie in Paris "a fairy-tale like show. . . . in the universe of Björk." A single note from Gretchen's exquisite voice soothes and mellows the mood of a room. In a few notes, a starry night sky gives way to northern lights in her voice. Her fresh, breezy phrases and lilting Brazilian rhythms have a hypnotizing effect on your senses. And when the drummer onstage shoots Gretchen a knowing smile, you know that in addition to charming the audience, she's got an extra-sensory connection with her band. After a saxophone solo, her entrance so expertly reflects its tone that you need a moment to realize her voice has taken over. By the time you've suspended your disbelief, she's already moved on, transforming that gorgeous, reedy sound into the muted elegance of Miles Davis.

With this shrewd, emotive, and subtle approach, Gretchen beat the odds and 12 other finalists to win the 2004 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocals Competition. The competition's estimable judges were not just impressed but moved by her performance: Flora Purim said she was "awed" by Gretchen; and during Gretchen's winning number, Little Jimmy Scott was seen waving his hands, church-style, in testimony to her soulful sound.

As a New York Times review of the competition noted, her "talent was so deeply centered and concentrated that the effect might have been the same had she stood behind a curtain." She's been embraced by her peers as a "musician's singer," a phrase for vocalists who emphasize musicality and expression over entertainment values.

For Wayne Shorter, Gretchen's rare ingenuity and passion for lyrics recall the greatest musician's singer of the 20th Century: "I think in an inconspicuous way, Gretchen Parlato knows how to play the same instrument that Frank Sinatra played," Wayne says.

Her stone-softening vocal mastery and artistic self-determination are the products of lifelong creative immersion. Gretchen comes from an artistic family in Los Angeles, where creative self-expression was encouraged. She has always been exposed to the avant-garde and controversial along with the mainstream.

Gretchen's artistic leanings became a full-time vocation when she entered the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. When, at 16, she was selected for a solo role in an L.A. Opera production and solo performance at the John Cage Retrospective at MoCA, music was transformed from fun hobby into the early stages of an artistic career. During these years at LACHSA, she began to develop her stylistic focus, and her love for Jazz and Brazilian music blossomed.

Her African percussion courses cultivated a facility for rhythm that led Gretchen to attend UCLA's Ethnomusicology Department, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Jazz Studies. She continued her study and performance of Brazilian music as well as the Portuguese language, and deepened her study of jazz with Kenny Burrell, Gerald Wilson, vocalist Tierney Sutton, studying and performing music and dance of Ghana with Kobra Ladzekpo.

In 2001, Gretchen was the first vocalist to be accepted into the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance, where Wayne Shorter, Terence Blanchard and Herbie Hancock served as the selecting judges. "Along with the rhythm section, we'd chosen a saxophonist, guitarist, and trombonist, but we couldn't find an adequate trumpet player," Herbie says.

"Gretchen fit the bill. She took the place of the trumpet player, mixing in with the other instruments when they were doing other harmonies. Her musical choices are much more instrumentally oriented than what you're used to hearing from jazz singers."

**For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact  
Brisbane Powerhouse PR Manager, Olivia Guglielmino  
p 07 3358 8671 m 0409 187 289 f 07 3358 8611 e [oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org)  
or Brisbane Powerhouse Marketing & Publicity Coordinator, Dorothy Farrell  
p 07 3358 8643 m 0423 463 278 f 07 3358 8611 e [dorothyf@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:dorothyf@brisbanepowerhouse.org)**

# BRISBANE POWERHOUSE ARTS

At the Monk Institute Gretchen studied and performed with Herbie and Wayne as well as Dave Holland, John Scofield, Mark Turner, Lewis Nash, Steve Turre, Carl Allen, Carmen Bradford, Carmen Lundy, and Terence Blanchard, who served as artistic director. The experience of daily rehearsal with the same musicians accustomed her to a high level of musicianship and professionalism. She performed at the 2002 St. Lucia Jazz Festival, 2002 Umbria Jazz Festival, 2003 Tri-C Jazz Festival, as well as the 2003 concert for UNESCO in Paris, France, with Herbie Hancock.

"Gretchen Parlato has proven herself to be exactly the type of driven, inspiring, and creative artist that I knew she would be the first time I met her." says Terence Blanchard. "She came to our school program with a style all her own. She is something special. I am very proud of her and look forward to working with her someday, and also hearing from her in the future."

As Gretchen was earning her educational achievements, she was already making her mark in the professional world. She performed "A Tribute To Jobim" at the 2001 Ojai Music Festival with legendary guitarist, Oscar Castro-Neves, and again with Oscar and Alex Acuña at the Marina Del Rey concert series in 2002. She represented Women in Jazz, performing at the 2003 Taos Jazz and Latin Festival.

Her recording credits include numerous film, television shows, commercials and studio records: Gretchen is guest vocalist on Terence's Blue Note album, "Flow", produced by Herbie Hancock; she provided vocals for the soundtrack to 2004 film, "Seeing Other People", starring Jay Mohr; "Amazon Moon," an album of Mike Stoller's music (of Lieber & Stoller) arranged by Brazilian pianist, Guilherme Vergueiro; and Walt Disney's "A World of Happiness," which also featured such artists as Lou Rawls, Gary Oldman, Debbie Harry, and Isaac Hayes. Gretchen has sung with dj's such as Cut Chemist (Jurassic 5, Ozomatli) and DJ Khalil of Self Scientific on their 2005 album "Change."

In the Fall of 2003 Gretchen moved to New York, where she quickly created a buzz, making a name for herself working at well-known jazz venues such as the Blue Note, Dizzy's Jazz at Lincoln Center, Sweet Rhythm, 55 Bar, the Jazz Gallery, Fat Cat, and the Knitting Factory. Along with her New York performances, she has performed "A Celebration of Jobim" at the Hollywood Bowl with Gal Costa, Ivan Lins, and Diane Reeves, performed with Roy Hargrove's Big Band, and at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C.

With her quiet intensity and musical sensitivity, Gretchen's voice brings to life the nuances of heart and soul for which words fall short. "There's no one like Gretchen out there," Wayne Shorter says, simply. "Gretchen is true blue."

**For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact  
Brisbane Powerhouse PR Manager, Olivia Guglielmino**

**p 07 3358 8671 m 0409 187 289 f 07 3358 8611 e [oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:oliviag@brisbanepowerhouse.org)  
or Brisbane Powerhouse Marketing & Publicity Coordinator, Dorothy Farrell  
p 07 3358 8643 m 0423 463 278 f 07 3358 8611 e [dorothyf@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:dorothyf@brisbanepowerhouse.org)**