

## Adrian Cunningham's Bon Voyage Concert featuring Ingrid James

This review might be filled with clichés but what better way to recall **a night to remember**. The night began with an instrumental set with Sydney reedman Adrian Cunningham **blowing up a storm** on tenor sax from the first note on his special interpretation of *The Preacher*, also featuring Matt Baker on piano and a great solo from Jeremy O'Connor on bass. An up-tempo *Just in Time* featured Adrian on clarinet, piano and some excellent fours with drummer Paul Hudson. Baker, also up from Sydney, played a fitting tribute to the great, now sadly lamented late, Oscar Peterson on OP's tune *Night Time*. Beautiful piano and tenor work followed on Sinatra's *All the way* - the thin sax player acknowledging the thin singer.

Ingrid joined in with *I remember you* with a great tenor solo by Adrian. She then captivated the full house with an upbeat *You'd be so nice to come home to*, her singing matched with a wonderful solo from Adrian on clarinet. The clarity and range of Ingrid's amazing voice was evident to all in the ballad *How deep is the ocean*. Jobim's *Quiet Nights* was a show stopper featuring voice, piano and Adrian, this time on flute – Oh yes!

Some Cannonball Adderley magic had unison opening and closing of voice and tenor sax and great solos from Adrian and Matt. A slow motown *You don't know what love is* with Paul cooking on brushes, Ingrid and Matt together, a pulsating bass line, amazing vocalise from Ingrid and Adrian's tenor solo **brought the house down**. The samba *Favella* (Shanty Town) had Adrian on flute reminiscent of the great Don Burrows. Miles was not forgotten with outstanding unison voice and tenor work, great scatting from Ingrid and tight ensemble playing with Matt to the fore. **does it get any better than this?**

A wordless balled by Charlie Hayden had voice and tenor again featuring together with a beautiful and tasteful Bach inspired piano solo and Jeremy soloing on bass. *Moaning* featured a wild tenor solo, exciting 4's from Paul and sensational voice-less vocalise and tenor from Australia's pre-eminent jazz singer and reeds player. *Norwegian Wood* was a tour de force for Ingrid, Adrian on flute and Matt taking full advantage of our great grand piano plus wonderful walking bass and drum accompaniment. Adrian showed how clarinet should sound with a tasteful rendition of *Blue Skies*.

This wonderful night came to an end with a groovy *Save your love for me*. The night had been introduced as a farewell to Adrian who was 'off to New York to learn a few tricks'. After tonight I don't think there are any tricks he has to learn. I call him Mr Energy. This review could not be complete without recognising the outstanding Sydney pianist Matt Baker supported superbly by two of our finest local talents, drummer Paul Hudson and bassist Jeremy O'Connor and of course the extraordinary jazz singer Ingrid James. **No, it doesn't get much better than this.**

John Gerard