

## ***2004 and 2005 Downbeat Magazine's Reader's Poll Best Jazz Vocalist***

**madeline eastman – BIO** Even before jazz vocalists sang their way back to the top of the heap in the 1990s, Madeline Eastman had established herself as a singular talent, capable of reshaping the art on her own terms in the new millennium. A thrilling live performer, Eastman takes her audiences on unpredictable musical journeys, embracing listeners in the radiant warmth of her personality, dazzling them with her vocal charm, breaking them up with her sharp wit, and inspiring silent awe with breathless readings of tender ballads.

With the imminent release of her fifth album, *The Speed of Life*, the daring and vivacious San Francisco singer not only secures the territory she has staked out as her own, but fearlessly explores new frontiers as well. Scaling uncharted pinnacles of hipness and sophistication, she further distinguishes herself as an original stylist without peer. "Eastman's great contribution," says the Chicago Reader, "lies in the tough, contemporary edge she brings to her music. She sings for adults; she even makes you glad to be one."

Recognized in Down Beat Magazine's International Critics Poll as "Talent Deserving Wider Recognition," Eastman has long been heralded for her vocal gifts, interpretive savvy, and irrepressible sense of adventure. *Jazziz* has noted her "easy, natural approach to lyrics" and her "exquisite appreciation of melodic complexity and impeccable presentation," and *Stereophile* has offered a concise and powerful description of the figure she cuts on stage: "She's hitting from beginning to end, sizzling and snapping with electricity, sliding across bar lines, scatting choruses, slowing to a whisper, bending melody line to her will. She is IN CHARGE." On *The Speed of Life*, Eastman's creative interpretations of jazz standards and bold forays into unconventional material dramatically illustrate what CD Review hailed as her "genius for discovering perfect vehicles for personal expression in improbable places."

"Everyone has something to say," Eastman grants, "but it takes a lot of skill to put a bow on it and give it away. This album represents an arrival for me — the culmination of my years of musical exploration and devotion to the art form. It is, for me, the perfect musical alignment: the right combination of players, the right musical context and the right time in my life to send the message."

After making her recording debut with the Full Faith & Credit Big Band, Eastman became a veritable magnet for stellar collaborators. Trumpeter Tom Harrell appeared on her first solo CD, and since then alto saxophonist Phil Woods, pianists Cedar Walton and Kenny Barron, drummer Tony Williams, and vocalist Mark Murphy have all appeared on her CD's. Barron has also recorded with Eastman on a session with Amsterdam's 50-piece Metropole Orchestra. For *The Speed of Life* she recruited pianist Randy Porter, bassist Rufus Reid, drummer Akira Tana, and trumpeter Mike Olmos to flesh out the unique vision she brings to a repertoire that ranges from Jose Neto's *Jogral* to Donny Hathaway's *Someday We'll All Be Free*. Rare is the singer who can authoritatively negotiate *Do I Hear A Waltz?* in 4/4 time, recast *Get Happy* in a minor key, and put an inimitable stamp on the movie classics *Dancing on the Ceiling*, *We Kiss in the Shadow*, and *Carol King's Up On the Roof*, all in the same program. But thanks to the consistent chemistry of her accompaniment and the alchemy of her own vocal magic, Eastman has realized her goal of making each song fresh while sustaining a coherent vibe through the entire work. As CD Review has put it, "Eastman doesn't tinker aimlessly, she reconstructs with purpose. She lays depth charges right from her opening."

Like her previous recordings — 1990's *Point of Departure*, 1992's *Mad About Madeline!*, 1994's *Art Attack* and 2001's *Bare — The Speed of Life* demonstrates Eastman's ability to create a personal form of jazz that recognizes no boundaries. Her artistic bravery parallels that of another Eastman idol, Miles Davis. "The first time I heard *Filles De Kilimanjaro* I was a goner," she says. "I was in a charged state and all my senses felt pushed to the limit. I knew I'd hit the mother lode, and, frankly, I wanted in."

Eastman's inventiveness and courage assume magnificent proportions on stage. From Japan to Finland, from

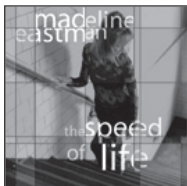
San Francisco and New York nightclubs to the Monterey and Glasgow Jazz Festivals, an Eastman performance is never less than exhilarating.

"I love the wild ride," she says, "the meeting of the minds in an instant. I never know exactly what's going to happen from moment to moment because, if you're open, it's up for grabs. If you've done your homework and you're playing with musicians of similar mind, it becomes that holy blend of know-how, experience and creativity."

"I think you have to give yourself away," she continues, "be completely malleable and vulnerable to the music, a constant pendulum of commitment and abandonment. It's been a long journey, but I think I've found the balance."

With the mature poise of a seasoned veteran and the edgy enthusiasm of an upstart, Eastman stands at the forefront of contemporary jazz singers, updating the legacy of Billie Holiday, Betty Carter and Shirley Horn, and defining the vocal vanguard of the 21st century.■

## DISCOGRAPHY



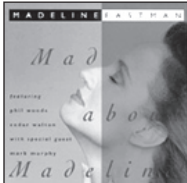
**THE SPEED OF LIFE**  
*featuring*  
Randy Porter-piano  
Rufus Reid-bass  
Akira Tana-drums  
Mike Olmos-trumpet



**BARE, A Collection of Ballads**  
*Duo album featuring*  
Tom Garvin on piano



**ART ATTACK**  
*featuring*  
Kenny Barron-piano  
Tony Williams-drums  
Turtle Island String Quartet



**MAD ABOUT MADELINE!**  
*featuring*  
Phil Woods-saxophone  
Cedar Walton-piano  
Mark Murphy-special guest



**POINT OF DEPARTURE**  
*featuring*  
Tom Harrell-trumpet  
Mike Wofford-piano  
Rufus Reid-bass

## CONTACT

Madeline Eastman  
415.567.2667  
web@madelineeastman.com

## WEBS

madelineeastman.com  
voiceshop.org



MAD-KAT Records  
PO Box 330425  
San Francisco, CA  
94133