



YOUN SUN NAH

Born on August 28, 1969 in Seoul/Korea

Youn Sun Nah grew up in a musical family: her father was a conductor, her mother a classical singer. She made her musical debut as a singer at age 23 with a concert with the Korean Symphony Orchestra, and went on to perform in numerous Korean musicals on a national stage, for which she has received numerous awards.

However, she did not find that musical environment fulfilling. She decided to go to Paris in 1995 to study jazz and French chanson at the CIM school (one of the oldest jazz schools in Europe), at the National Music Institute of Beauvais, and at the Nadia and Lili Boulanger Conservatory. Her innate talent for jazz revealed itself when she started playing in Parisian jazz clubs with her group, the Youn Sun Nah 5tet. She made her rounds on the Paris club scene, performances that would earn her invitations to work with many famous musicians. Youn Sun Nah made strong showing in a number of jazz competitions like La Défense, St. Maur, and Montmartre. She became the buzzword in theatres and festivals all over France, while also performing in Korea, essentially managing simultaneous careers in two countries.

Producing five albums in six years, she held numerous performances in France, Europe, and in Asia including Korea. Such vigorous activity would earn her an award as "Best Artist" in the Crossover category in Korea in 2004. The same year, the release of *So I Am...* was widely celebrated by French audiences as well as the press, who regarded her as one of the most remarkable singers of this generation. Active touring and musical performances finally came to fruition in the form of the Grand Prize at the highly reputable Jazz à Juan Concours in 2005, in addition to the prize of Best Young Artist Of The Year in Korea. Youn Sun Nah established her position as a premiere jazz artist in the Asian music scene and marketplace with the album *Memory Lane*, co-produced with Denmark's top pianist Niels Lan Doky and Korean bassist Kim Jeong-Ryul in 2007. She also earned recognition from the American media and noted personalities from around the world with an invitation and performance at the Jazz at Lincoln Center, which would launch her to world stardom.

She is an artist who never fails to move audiences wherever she may be performing, in Europe, USA, Australia, and Asia. In 2009 ACT has signed her as an exclusive artist. Together with world-famous Swedish artists like Ulf Wakenius and Lars Danielsson she recorded her ACT-debut, *VOYAGE* (ACT 9019-2), which was released in May 2009.

"Voyage" made it into the French top ten of the jazz charts and won the coveted "CHOC" as CD of the month (Jazzman) as well as the "Korean Music Award" (Best Jazz album 2009). The album earned high international critical recognition. Jazzwise (UK) stated: "A wonderfully clear voice, with superb melismatic control and dynamic poise. A welcome new presence on the international jazz scene." And Göteborgs Posten (SE) exclaimed: "Oh, what a voice!"

In October 2009, Youn Sun Nah was awarded with the „Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres“ for outstanding achievements in the field of arts by the French ministry of culture. This put her in a row with prominent awardees such as David Bowie, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Albert Mangelsdorff, Leonardo DiCaprio and Dustin Hoffman. Also, in 2009, Youn Sun Nah won the people's choice award at the prestigious Munich BMW Welt Jazz Award.

Youn Sun Nah's second ACT album "Same Girl" (ACT 9024-2) was released late in September 2010. On it, she switches back and forth in a masterly fashion and seemingly without effort between chanson, Korean music, singer-songwriter, jazz standards and even a reinterpretation of Metallica's "Enter Sandman", all the while sounding entirely authentic and unmistakable. In doing so, Youn Sun Nah is supported by her wonderfully tight band, with producer and bassist Lars Danielsson, guitarist Ulf Wakenius and drummer Xavier Desandre-Navarre.

"Same Girl" was the greatest success in Youn Sun Nah's career at the time – both in Korea and in Europe. It raced to number one on the French jazz charts, stayed in the top 20 for 80 weeks and even made it to the top of the pop charts. "Same Girl" was the biggest-selling jazz album of 2011 in France. Youn Sun Nah keeps winning prizes – for example the "CHOC Award" from Jazzman / Jazz Magazine, "Discovery of the Year" from "So Jazz" magazine, the "Prix Mimi Perrin du Jazz Vocal" as vocalist of the year and for the fourth time the "Korean Music Award" for the "Jazz und Crossover Album of the Year". In November 2010, Youn Sun Nah performed for the heads of state of more than 20 countries at the G20 summit in Seoul, South Korea – including the American President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. On 30 April 2011, Youn Sun Nah was the star guest at the 25th anniversary of the cult musical "Linie Eins" in Berlin's GRIPS Theatre – the show, in the Korean version of which she once began her career.

Up to now the highpoint of the "Same Girl" success story in Germany has been the ECHO award for Best Jazz Vocalist International that Youn Sun Nah won on 17 June 2011, beating out other big-name nominees the likes of Stacey Kent and Lizz Wright. Her performance of "Enter Sandman" was one of the highlights of the awards ceremony. "Same Girl" went gold in France in 2012. Youn Sun Nah played around 100 concerts in Europe and Asia, filling the biggest theatres, especially in France.

On "Lento" (ACT 9030-2), Youn Sun Nah's third album with ACT, one of France's most masterly and innovative young accordion players, Vincent Peirani, is added to her usual quartet of Ulf Wakenius, Lars Danielsson and Xavier-Desandere Navarre. "Lento" is the essence of Youn Sun Nah's unique strengths, displaying an even broader diversity of styles: in addition to jazz and the jazz-related, she respectfully but unreservedly takes what she wants from chanson, pop, folk and now, for the first time, European classical music. She impresses and enchants even more than before with her vocal virtuosity, dynamism and expressiveness, that exposes the soul of the songs and touches the hearts of her audience. So it came as no surprise that the album topped the French jazz charts for seven weeks, reached 14 in the pop charts and made it to number one on the jazz charts in Germany.

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