

Jennifer Ward-Lealand

The Look of Love
Evocative / Provocative



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Following the success of her Marlene Dietrich cabaret *Falling In Love Again*, Jennifer Ward-Lealand takes centre stage again with *The Look of Love - Evocative/Provocative*, a new cabaret show celebrating love in all its guises.

Featuring songs by Cole Porter, Stephen Sondheim, Burt Bacharach, Jacques Brel, Kris Kristofferson, George Harrison and more, *The Look of Love* reunites Jennifer with musical director and pianist Grant Winterburn, bassist Aaron Coddell and lighting designer Andrew Malmo for a sophisticated and glamorous night of song.

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“Jennifer Ward-Lealand’s new cabaret-style show . . . takes us to the highest levels of class and sophistication. . . . Should you ever have the opportunity, don’t hesitate to see this show.”

- Capital Times

“Style, class and sophistication with impeccable phrasing from the sensational Jennifer Ward-Lealand made The Look of Love a perfect end-of-year treat”.

- Capital Times year-end round up

“ . . . she holds the audience with an emotional openness . . . in every love song, and she never falters into sentimentality. With her silky smooth voice and stunning presence . . . she provides us with an evening that is all class.”

- Dominion Post

“Jennifer Ward-Lealand earns those over-the-top rave quotes , , , with sublime grace, constant control, and a voice that most times was like cream running slick across a smooth chest . . . This was an evening for people who love to listen; who love great songs and great tunes . . . it was for people who love to hear great songs sung well,”

- GayNZ.com

“Jennifer Ward-Lealand is the complete package - she . . . had a crowded house hanging on every song. . . . Ward-Lealand can’t miss.”

- Waikato Times



Reviews

Capital Times, December 2008

The Look of Love: Evocative-Provocative, Downstage, reviewed by Garth Wilshire

Love it

Jennifer Ward-Lealand's new cabaret-style show once again takes us to the highest levels of class and sophistication.

We could be sitting in an up-market, Manhattan cocktail bar, (but without the tables) listening to probably the best singing actress in Australasia.

Ward-Lealand takes us on a journey through love of many sorts in *The Look of Love*. Every song is beautifully shaped to transport us out of a drizzly night in downtown Wellington.

With grand piano played by the superbly talented Grant Winterburn, underpinned by imaginative double bass of Aaron Coddell, Ward-Lealand uses her innate stage skills to weave magic with her rendition of classics.

Andrew Malmo bathes the stage with evocative lighting enhancing everything.

Every word could be heard in the classics from Sammy Cahn, Burt Bacharach, and the emotionally charged master, Jacques Brel.

Peel Me a Grape - Blossom Dearie's inimitable number was a wonder from Jennifer. From Stephen Sondheim's paean to unrequited love, *Losing My Mind*, to the zaniness in his mock bossa nova classic *The Boy From . . .*,

with its marvelously quirky lyrics, Ward-Lealand demonstrated phrasing and subtlety which made each song her own.

Glorious Irving Berlin, the hints in suggestively risqué Cole Porter, naughty yet funny parody in Tom Lehrer's *Masochism Tango*, this was marvelous.

Her stunningly elegant gowns and sheer presence are the icing on the cake. Should you ever have the opportunity, don't hesitate to see this show.

Dominion Post, December 2008

Smooth as silk, full of emotion

WHAT: *The Look of Love*, presented by Jennifer Ward-Lealand

WHERE: Downstage Theatre, until December 18

LAURIE ATKINSON - The Dominion Post | Wednesday, 10 December 2008

There's no need to travel to New York for an evening of smooth, sophisticated cabaret performed by a top-liner in her prime. It's all right here in Wellington, although we may not be sipping cocktails at tables looking out on to the Manhattan skyline. By the end of *The Look of Love* one felt, in words from *Peel Me a Grape*, a Diana Krall song she sings, that we had been thoroughly champagned.

Jennifer Ward-Lealand is back after her success with her Marlene Dietrich show. *The Look of Love* is a selection of love songs ranging from Broadway standards to Jacques Brel, Sammy Cahn, and Bobbie Gentry.

The pain, the laughter and the passion of love are presented in a simple and carefully structured performance that allows her to sing the songs with an intimacy and emotional force that are far more powerful than the belting power of any Broadway performance, although one is always aware that she could belt them out with the best of them if she wanted to.

In the dramatic *Losing My Mind*, she brings all her skills as an actress to bear on Sondheim's song of a long-aching, unrequited love affair. Just by extending for a fraction of a second the first two vowels, she subtly conveys more pain of sleepless nights than most who turn the torch song into a long howl of agony. She does the same for *Could I Leave You?* (also from Sondheim's *Follies*) in which an unhappy marriage is laid bare in silky tones rather than red-hot anger.

She does the same for the comic songs by underplaying them. Cole Porter's *Let's Misbehave*, Sondheim's *The Boy From* and Linda Eder's *I'd Like to Hate Myself in the Morning* are slyly suggestive, although her funny, sexy, encore of Irving Berlin's *I Love a Piano* is way over the top. However, she daringly underplays Tom Lehrer's outrageous parody *The Masochism Tango*, so that the singer's desire for her lover's whips, rather than his lips, is almost disconcerting.

From the start with Berlin's plaintive *What'll I Do?*, which segues into Rodgers and Hart's *Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered*, she holds the audience with an emotional openness that is present in every love song, and she never falters into sentimentality.

With her silky smooth voice and stunning presence, and the excellent support of Grant Winterburn on piano and Aaron Coddell on bass, she provides us with an evening that is all class.

GayNZ.com, December 2008

Look of Love is memorable and sublime

By Steve Attwood, 9th December 2008 - 12:08 pm

The Look of Love; Jennifer Ward-Lealand

Downstage Theatre, Wellington; Season runs to 18 December.

As a bloke who has had rather too many casual encounters disappear into the utterly forgettable mists of time, I had some sympathy for Dudley Moore when he said he was looking for “a meaningful one night stand”.

I hope Moore found his. Mine was at Downstage last night . . . a rare treat, for this old leather queen, spending an evening with a beautiful woman who, you get the feeling, has steel in her bones and would definitely not be a sub (though God bless ‘em one and all). I was indeed, as one of her timeless numbers so eloquently put it, “bewitched, bothered and bewildered.”

Jennifer Ward-Lealand earns those over-the-top rave quotes you see in large print on preview posters, and she earns it with sublime grace, constant control, and a voice that most times was like cream running slick across a smooth chest - utterly lickable; and, just occasionally, had the depth and danger of boulders tumbling hidden in a treacherous torrent.

This was an evening for people who love to listen; who love great songs and great tunes, as timeless as Bacharach and the Beatles, or as startlingly naughty as a little 50's number, *The Masochism Tango* . . . (no surprises that the latter rang my bells!)

Oh, and for the gay boys especially, listen out for the straight-girl-loves-gay-boy innuendo in *The Boy From* blah de blah de blah (OK, not the proper title!

I couldn't pronounce, let alone spell, the real title, which was such a tongue twister it left Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious in the dust!).

And, more especially, it was for people who love to hear great songs sung well. Ward-Lealand has a beautiful, but not unique, jazz/cabaret voice.

What shunts her from bloody good to memorable is the masterful control she exercises over it, and not just because she still had nine more evenings to go! In songs like *Something In The Way He Moves* she took us to the edge of a power burst, but just pulled back at the last minute, leaving us wanting more, but knowing we didn't need it to get the best of the song. She let us have it for the encore, and that was enough.

Full marks too, to pianist Grant Winterburn and bassist Aaron Coddell; superb accompaniment, so much sound from just two instruments.

Highlights for me were the nod to Bobby Gentry with *Ode to Billie Joe*, Irving Berlin's *What'll I Do* and Jacque Brel's *If You Go Away* sung in English and very, very sexy French!

Oh, and if I ever come back as a girl ! . . . I wanna look that good in a frock!

The Nelson Mail, July 2008

Ward-Lealand Smooth and Sultry

The Look of Love, Jennifer Ward-Lealand at the Nelson School of Music.

Last Night. Reviewed by Paula Cunniffe

With a powerhouse voice and goddess-like proportions, Jennifer Ward-Lealand shimmied on stage in true professional cabaret style to another sold-out festival audience.

I've always been in awe of Ward-Lealand's mouth, watching her on television as a comedienne and later on in her movie performances with those amazing teeth and a calm and sultry speaking voice.

Last night with a tone only a shade higher than a whisper, that mouth became a dynamic vessel for note-perfect sound as it broke into song.

Above a setting of round candle-lit tables within the auditorium, Ward-Lealand sang carefully chosen songs that flirted with the theme of love --sappy, funny and lusty. Sometimes a week bit naughty, as in Tom Lehrer's Exquisitely painful Masochism Tango, a surprising crowd rouser among some of Nelson's most conservative.

Being a romantic-love cynic, the theme name could have scared me off from attending. But with the broad range of songs chosen it gave a balanced representation that avoided the cliché one-sidedness of being in love.

In between, Ward-Lealand made reference to her own love connections in the form of family and her own meanings in relation to those that composed them.

Personal favourites were Dave Frishberg's Peel Me a Grape, and my own foolish escapades in John Meyer's I'd Like to Hate Myself in the Morning, as well as Cole Porter's Let's Misbehave.

The ultimate performance was Bobbie Gentry's Ode to Billy Joe, a song I'd never quite understood the lyrics to until Ward-Lealand melted it out over a rapturous audience.

Ward-Lealand was accompanied by pianist-musical director Grant Winterburn and bassist Aaron Coddell. Both audibly and visibly luscious in themselves -- they could have been the only ones there and still made it a great show

The decision to include Ward-Lealand in this festival programme was a sharp one.

Waikato Times, February 2007

What: *The Look of Love*, at the Hamilton Gardens Summer Festival

Who: Jennifer Ward-Lealand with musical director and pianist Grant Winterburn, bassist Aaron Coddell and lighting designer Andrew Malmo

Where: Victorian Garden Conservatory, last night

Reviewed by: Denise Irvine

Jennifer Ward-Lealand is the complete package - she does theatre, film and TV and she has a fine singing voice as well.

Last night she brought her latest cabaret show - "celebrating love in all its guises" - to the Hamilton Gardens Summer Festival for a single outing and had a crowded house hanging on every song.

With her handsome presence, powerful range, excellent diction, and easy transitions from comedy to classics, Ward-Lealand can't miss. Yet although she makes it look easy, engaging the audience with favourites from Stephen Sondheim, Cole Porter, Kris Kristofferson, Bobbie Gentry and others, the show is underpinned by the utmost professionalism.

It's hard to pick favourites from this current show, because they were all good, from the sensual, velvety voiced *Peel Me A Grape* to the quirky comedy of Tom Lehrer's *Masochism Tango*, and Irving Berlin's haunting *What'll I Do When You Are Far Away*. But if I had to choose a stand-out, it would be Ward-Lealand's rendition of Bobbie Gentry's bittersweet *Ode to Billy Joe*. Close your eyes, forget about the hanging baskets of the Victorian Conservatory, and you're right up there with a grieving girl on Choctow Ridge.

Song List

Don't Talk Just Sing - Sammy Cahn/Jimmy Van Heusen

I've Got to Have You - Kris Kristofferson

So in Love - Cole Porter

Peel Me a Grape - Dave Frishberg

I'd Like to Hate Myself in the Morning - John Meyer

Something - George Harrison

What'll I Do? - Irving Berlin

Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered - Rodgers & Hart

Love Me or Leave Me - Walter Donaldson/Gus Kahn

I Don't Know Why - Roy Turk/Fred Ahlert

Losing My Mind - Stephen Sondheim

The Boy From . . . - Stephen Sondheim

I Only Want Some - Lieber & Stoller

Let's Misbehave - Cole Porter

Masochism Tango - Tom Lehrer

Lush Life - Billy Strayhorn

Ode to Billy Joe - Bobbie Gentry

Love - John Lennon

Ne me quitte pas - Jacques Brel

Could I Leave You - Stephen Sondheim

Here's to Life - Artie Butler/Phyllis Jean Molinary

I Love a Piano - Irving Berlin

The Look of Love - Burt Bacharach

Jennifer Ward-Lealand

Since she first trod the boards at the age of seven, Jennifer has become one of New Zealand's leading actresses. In 1982 she trained at Auckland's influential Theatre Corporate, joining the main company soon after and appearing in plays including *Hedda Gabler*, *The Trial*, *Top Girls*, and *King Lear*.

Since then she has worked extensively in theatre, film, TV, musical and radio. Theatre performances include *Carousel*, *Agnes of God*, *Nana*, *The Irving Berlin Show* (Mercury Theatre), *Cabaret*, *Assassins* (Watershed Theatre), *Breaking the Silence*, *The Real Thing*, *Side by Side by Sondheim* (Centrepont Theatre), *The Threepenny Opera* (Downstage Theatre), *Tell Me on a Sunday* (Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra), *Into the Woods*, *The Herbal Bed*, *The Graduate*, *The Bach*, *Twelfth Night*, *My Name is Gary Cooper* (Auckland Theatre Company), Pinter's *Old Times*, the title role of Marlene Dietrich in the sell-out production of *Marlene* [(potent pause) Productions], *The Goat*, *Decadence* (Licentious Productions), and the sell-out production of *Berlin* (Silo Theatre), which she co-created.

In 1989/90, she toured New Zealand and internationally with The Front Lawn, and in the mid-90's moved to Australia to join the core cast of the comedy series *Full Frontal*, and played Viola in the Adelaide International Festival's production of *Twelfth Night*.

Jennifer's film work includes *The Footstep Man*, *Desperate Remedies*, *The Ugly*, *Fracture*, *Linda's Body* and *The Painted Lady*. Television includes *Full Frontal*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, *Shortland Street*, *Duggan*, and *Interrogation*.

Awards include Best Actress (Sitges, Spain) for *Desperate Remedies*, Best Actress (GOFTA, NZ) for *Danny and Raewyn*; Best Theatrical Performer

(NZ Entertainment Awards), The Evening Standard Best Actress Award for *Breaking the Silence* (Centrepont Theatre), and most recently Best New Zealand Actress in the *Metro* Readers' Poll for her role as Stevie in Edward Albee's *The Goat*.

Jennifer's directing credits include *Sister Wonder Woman*, *Arahaotearoa* (Silo), *Let Yourself Go* (which she also devised), *Big River* and *By Thunder* for Unitec School of Performing and Screen Arts, Handel's *Acis and Galatea* for NBR New Zealand Opera, assistant director (to Michael Hurst) of *Macbeth* for The Large Group, *A Christmas Carol* for Auckland Theatre Company, and *The Mystery of Irma Vep* and *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* for Silo Theatre. She was also producer of *Macbeth* for The Large Group.

In 2003 Jennifer devised her one-woman cabaret *Falling in Love Again* and has since toured the show throughout NZ plus performances in Australia. She has also introduced the cd *Falling in Love Again*, a studio recording of 23 songs from her touring show. 2007 saw Jennifer introduce her new cabaret, *The Look of Love - Evocative/Provocative*.

In 2008 Jennifer played Jenny Diver in *The Threepenny Opera* for Silo Theatre/The Large Group; played Dominique in *Le Sud* (ATC The Next Stage), directed *Top Girls* for Unitec graduating students, and toured *The Look of Love* to Canberra, Nelson, Hastings, and Wellington. She is a member of the core cast voicing the upcoming animated tv series *Buzzy Bee*.

Jennifer was awarded an ONZM "for services to theatre and the community" in the 2007 New Year's Honours List and is President of New Zealand Actors Equity.

Jennifer's official website is www.jenniferwardlealand.com.

Grant Winterburn

musical director

Grant Winterburn is one of New Zealand's leading keyboard players on both piano and organ and has many years experience as a musical director, soloist, session musician and keyboard lecturer.

He is highly regarded for his jazz organ and piano interpretations of the classic jazz repertoire and performs at concerts and festivals around New Zealand with some of the country's most talented performers.

Musical Director credits include *Geoff Sewell (Amici) and Incognito Artists*, *Falling in Love Again* and *The Look of Love* starring Jennifer Ward-Lealand, *The Threepenny Opera*, directed by Michael Hurst for Silo Theatre/The Large Group, and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *The Rocky Horror Show* for Auckland Theatre Company.

Aaron Coddel

bass player

Aaron started his musical career in high school playing drums and guitar before focusing on the bass. After cutting his teeth on the Capitals live music scene, he embarked on a music degree in jazz performance, graduating from Massey University in Wellington with a BMus.

A stint in London saw Aaron working consistently in both the live music and studio scenes. Since his return to New Zealand, he has continued to work with an impressive array of artists including King Kapisi, Annie Crummer, Hello Sailor, Hammond Gamble, Jan Hellriegel, Peter Ulrich, Caitlin Smith, Karen Hunter, Chicago Smokeshop, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, The Lounge Lizards, and The Beatgirls.

In addition he has toured or recorded with jazz greats Cleo Laine, Mark Murphey and George Coleman. This fusion of music styles, from rock to pop, jazz to hip hop, Latin and blues to classical and drum & bass complement his overall music approach, and has cemented Aaron as a much in-demand electric and acoustic bassist.

Since performing in the sell out season of *Marlene* at the Herald Theatre in Auckland, Aaron has toured extensively with Jennifer Ward-Lealand in New Zealand and Australia with the hugely successful *Falling in Love Again* and most recently with her new show *The Look of Love* at Wellington's Downstage Theatre.

Andrew Malmo

producer

Andrew Malmo is a producer, production manager, lighting designer and photographer, and is managing director of Strata Creative Limited.

Through Strata Creative Ltd., Andrew currently acts as Programme Manager for Auckland Festival 2009, where he also acts as executive producer on their major new commission, *The Arrival*.

He also produces and production/tour-manages Silo Theatre's *Bare* by Toa Fraser, and *The Case of Katherine Mansfield* by Catherine Downes, as well as Jennifer Ward-Lealand's acclaimed cabaret shows, *The Look of Love - Evocative/Provocative* and the Dietrich tribute *Falling in Love Again*, and has recently started acting as agent for Wellington-based The Playground and their groundbreaking new show *Sleep/Wake* for national and international touring.

His company Strata Creative is producing three theatre works in various stages of development in 2009 - *Electric* with Warwick Blair, *A Thousand Hills* with Margaret-Mary Hollins, and *Little Che* with Paolo Rotondo, and is establishing local and international networks, with a view to touring more New Zealand work internationally.

Andrew coordinates Auckland Festival's *Watch This Space*, from 2007 and 2009.

Andrew has a technical background as well as professional sales experience and is in the 2008-09 ART Venture acceleration program for creative entrepreneurs.

Andrew is also a professional and art photographer.

