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## DUTCH SAX SUPERSTAR CANDY DULFER IS ALL FUNKED UP!

### **Deluxe Luxury Edition 2-CD Set, *Funked Up & Chilled Out*, Showcases the Eclectic Saxophonist's Two Distinct Sides**

Nearly two decades after her GRAMMY<sup>®</sup>-nominated recording debut in 1990, saxophonist Candy Dulfer has earned a reputation as a high-energy performer with charisma and sex appeal to burn. But along the way – both on stage and in the studio – she has offered numerous glimpses of her softer, quieter side. These two creative dimensions make up the whole of her diverse and eclectic approach to songwriting and performing.

Dulfer bares it all – the brassy and edgy as well as the relaxed and mellow – with the May 12, 2009, release of *Funked Up & Chilled Out* (HUCD 3152E) on Heads Up International, a division of Concord Music Group. The deluxe luxury edition 2-CD set, scheduled for international release, features one disc loaded with the revved-up funk and R&B typical of her legendary live show, and another that simmers with the cooler, quieter groove that settles in after hours when it's time to kick back and relax.

Disc one, the *Funked Up* half of the project, started coming together not long after the critically acclaimed 2007 release of Dulfer's Heads Up debut, *Candy Store*. In the meantime, she and her band had been asked by Dutch filmmaker Fred van Dijk to record the soundtrack for *Kissed by the Grape*, a documentary exploring the world of organic winemaking. The soundtrack project was the genesis of *Chilled Out*, the more ambient disc 2 of the edition.

“We loved the music we'd made for the movie so much that we thought it should be part of the record,” says Dulfer. “We had a whole bunch of uptempo, fun songs and a whole bunch of really beautiful, really atmospheric slow songs. We felt that all of these tracks together really represented the two sides of what I do. So we said, ‘Why not make a double album and not interfere with either groove? We'll just have one album that's totally upbeat, and another that's more relaxed and introspective.’”

The result is something for everyone. *Funked Up* kicks off with the high-powered and percussive “First in Line,” a track built atop the rock-solid rhythm section of bassist Chance Howard and drummer Kirk Johnson, and augmented by the backing vocals of Dulfer and Monique Bakker (a recurring vocalist on Dulfer's recordings). Assisting Dulfer with the brass is a three-piece horn section that includes trumpeter Jan van Duikeren, tenor saxophonist Guido Nijs and trombonist Louk Boudesteijn.

“My Funk,” one of Dulfer’s favorites, showcases the vocals of Pete Philly, one of the most prominent rappers in the Netherlands. “He just came in, heard the music and loved it,” says Dulfer. “He said, ‘Just leave me alone in this room for about twenty minutes.’ After a while, he came out and said, ‘Okay, I’ve got it.’ That’s the beauty of hip-hop artists. If they’re good, that’s the way they work. Like jazz musicians it’s a very intuitive, very immediate creative process.”

Full of sass and spice, vocalist Leona barrels through the rollicking techno-beat of “Step Up,” and later the reggae-flavored “True & Tender.” Dulfer calls Leona “a force to be reckoned with, a very talented singer and performer and entertainer. Before she put the vocal track down on ‘True & Tender,’ it was just a jam, and we didn’t even know if it would end up on the album. But she really made it her own.”

The nostalgic “CD 101.9” is a tribute to the former New York radio station that gave Dulfer and her band a lot of airplay around the time of their first visit to the States in 1991. In between the solos and chorus breaks are sound bytes from an original broadcast by veteran DJ Russ Davis hyping the band’s gig at The Bottom Line. “It’s from a cassette tape that my father had saved for years,” says Dulfer. “Thomas Bank, our keyboardist and producer, took the DJ’s comments and put them into the song. It’s such a great reminder of the first time I came to New York. Both the station and Russ helped me a lot in the early part of my career, and they helped launch a lot of other artists as well.”

Also on the nostalgic side is “Cruise Control,” which Dulfer calls “a retro kind of song that goes back to artists like Al Jarreau and Grover Washington – the music that I grew up with.”

Things slow down significantly on the second disc, *Chilled Out*, beginning with the smoky and suggestive “Bliss2This,” featuring rapper and trombonist Joseph Bowie of Defunkt. “I told him my feelings about this song reminded me of the deterioration of a relationship. He said, ‘I know exactly what you mean.’ A couple days later, he came back with a vocal track, and he put some really cool trombone tracks in there as well. I just played a little bit around what he did, and Chance Howard – who worked with us on *Candy Store* – put some beautiful vocals to it that gave it a bit more of an R&B groove.”

Midtempo and rhythmic, “Still I Love You” has already become part of Dulfer’s live show in recent months, and the early feedback has been very favorable. “We first played it in Japan, and we invited the Japanese audiences at the Blue Note to come up with ideas for the title,” she says. “We got a lot of great responses, but this very tall, very beautiful Japanese woman at one of our gigs wrote this title on a piece of paper and handed it to us. We knew immediately that it captured what the song was about.”

Other tracks of note include the aptly-titled “Ambiente,” featuring some relaxed interplay between Dulfer and guitarist Frank Stukker. This same combination of brass and strings sets up the sensual underpinnings of “Supernatural” and the Latin vibe of “Oda Al Vino.” The melodic closer, “Sunrise,” ends the set on an optimistic note by not only heralding the dawn of a new day, but also holding out the promise that another night of energy and passion is not far off.

“This album is something you can listen to in its entirety and not be distracted by abrupt changes in style,” says Dulfer. “Some people are really into the uptempo stuff, some people prefer the slower stuff, and some people appreciate the difference between the two. There are a lot of people who like to be transported to a specific vibe, and I think those people will be really happy with this album, because they can choose whatever style they want to listen to.”

Whether your agenda for the evening calls for revving or relaxing – or perhaps one and then

the other – *Funked Up & Chilled Out* packs the necessary grooves to fire you up at the front end of your night out and then cool you off after hours.

Whatever happens after that is up to you.

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