

Tierney Sutton

Biography

“A serious jazz artist who takes the whole enterprise to another level.”

– *The New York Times*

In a world of overnight sensations, vocalist Tierney Sutton’s success has come from the road less traveled. A decision in the mid ’90s to move to Southern California from her New England home resulted in a decade-long collaboration with her current band mates. A Wisconsin-born choir girl, unexposed to jazz until college, Sutton eventually found the best of the best – collaborators with their own impressive jazz pedigrees, from Natalie Cole to Diana Krall, from Ray Charles to Randy Brecker – pianist Christian Jacob, bassists Trey Henry and Kevin Axt, and drummer Ray Brinker. Twelve years and seven critically acclaimed CDs later, Sutton and her longtime band demonstrate what collective consultation and dedicated teamwork can achieve. Reviewers repeatedly say that audiences experience a rare and powerful harmony, achieved by humble performers at the top of their game. The road less traveled in an impatient world.

A versatile studio singer as well as premiere entertainer, Sutton’s voice was recently featured on Lions Gate’s hit film *The Cooler*, starring William H. Macy and Alec Baldwin. She can also be heard in Paramount’s *Twisted*, starring Samuel L. Jackson, Andy Garcia and Ashley Judd. And in 2004, Sutton and her band scored the independent feature film *Blue in Green*, which was released by the Unica Project. Sutton’s unique voice is also regularly featured in commercials representing such organizations as BMW, Coca Cola, Dodge and J.C. Penney.

Educated at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Sutton became a semi-finalist in the Thelonious Monk Jazz Vocal Competition in 1998. One year later, her first solo CD, *Introducing Tierney Sutton*, was released to rave reviews and nominated for a 1999 Indie Award for Best Jazz Vocal Album.

Later that year, Sutton signed with the Telarc Jazz label. On *Unsung Heroes*, released in March 2000, she took popular jazz standards that are usually performed instrumentally (Joe Henderson’s “Recordame,” Clifford Brown’s “Joy Spring,” Wayne Shorter’s “Speak No Evil,” Dizzy Gillespie’s “Con Alma” and others) and recorded them with vocals. Soon she became one of the critics’ most talked about musicians.

Sutton’s second Telarc project, *Blue in Green*, released in June 2001, was an album of music written by or associated with pianist Bill Evans. Featuring fourteen incredible performances from Sutton and her band, *Blue in Green* also included a guest appearance by former Evans drummer Joe La Barbera.

Released in September 2002, *Something Cool*, quickly rose to #1 on the jazz charts and

garnered extensive airplay across the U.S. and Europe. This adventurous recording included a swinging rendition of “Route 66,” Lerner and Loewe’s “Wouldn’t It Be Lovely,” “I’ve Grown Accustomed to His Face” and “Show Me,” Willie Nelson’s “Crazy,” and a fresh arrangement of “Ding Dong! The Witch Is Dead,” one of Sutton’s concert favorites.

In March 2004, with the release of *Dancing in the Dark*, which debuted in the *Billboard* Jazz top ten and remained on the charts for over 15 weeks, Sutton completed one of the most critically acclaimed and commercially successful runs in the history of New York’s legendary Oak Room. The packed houses at the Oak Room and the rave reviews she received eventually led to her February 2005 Carnegie Hall debut with the New York Pops.

In March 2005, the Tierney Sutton Band performed in front of a select audience of friends and fans at Birdland in New York City. Produced by Elaine Martone, *I’m with the Band* was Sutton’s first live recording and features never before recorded material from throughout her career.

In June 2005, Sutton won *JazzWeek*’s Vocalist of the Year Award. In December 2005, *I’m with the Band* was nominated for a GRAMMY® Award in the category of Best Jazz Vocal Album. In October 2006, Sutton won the Jazz Vocalist Award at the 23rd annual L.A. Jazz Society Awards

The Tierney Sutton Band released *On the Other Side* in February 2007. Interpreting classic material in a fresh new way with some extraordinary arrangements, the album explores the theme of happiness and the irony of searching for it through love and loss.

Desire, set for release in March 2009, is the seventh Telarc release for Sutton and her band. While the songs in this eleven-track set are mostly jazz standards, they are framed by opening and closing tracks that are embellished with lyrics lifted from sacred religious and spiritual texts that speak to the evils of greed and the inordinate desire for fame and worldly goods. “To me, this record is about stepping back and recognizing the difference between the voices we hear that are not our own and the ones that are truly within us,” Sutton explains, “and discovering that the material things that we want or desire are not usually a path to happiness, and are not usually a path to ourselves.”

An active educator, Sutton has served in the Jazz Studies Department at the University of Southern California, as well as giving workshops and clinics throughout the world.

Telarc Discography

Unsung Heroes (2000) CD-83477

Blue in Green (2001) CD-83522

Something Cool (2002) CD-83548
Dancing in the Dark (2004) CD-83592
I'm with the Band (2005) CD-83616
On the Other Side (2007) CD-83650
Desire (2008) CD-83685