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## HandStamp

Your entry to the Houston music scene with Sara Cress and Joey Guerra

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April 27, 2007

### Jazz vocalist Kristine Mills releases debut album

Jazz vocalist Kristine Mills celebrates the release of her debut CD, *Kristine Mills Music*, this weekend. I asked Mills a few questions so that we can all get to know her a little bit better:

**Q. Tells us a bit about yourself How long have you been performing in Houston? Where do you regularly perform?**

A. I am a native Houstonian and have told that I was born to perform. Hopefully I have impressed audiences with my varied repertoire, vocal prowess and command of various languages for the two decades that I've been a professional musician.

I am a devoted student of music and voice, and began studying in Houston in my teens, then continued to study while earning my degree in linguistics and Spanish at the University of Texas. While attending college, I performed with groups Hot Wax, a '50s-'60s revue, and B'samim, a Jewish folk band. After graduation I returned to Houston to launch my professional jazz vocalist career at Ovarions in 1991. I was noted for pulling in a record turnout of friends, family and jazz fans. Since then I have performed on stages throughout Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Brazil and Belgium.

I left the music business for a number of years, but moved back to Houston in 2004 to resume my singing career. I am just one among many talented jazz vocalists in Houston.

I perform weekly, on alternating Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays at the Tasting Room's two locations (Uptown and River Oaks), plus the new location of Truluck's. My group does a lot of private parties and special events and of course the large group will be performing at Cezanne this Saturday.

In June I will perform at Sambuca in Atlanta with noted pianist Bill Wilson and his trio, then hopefully I will



Courtesy photo

Kristine Mills performs Saturday at Cezanne.

return to the stage in Rio, Brazil with pianist Paulo Midosi in July.

**Q. Who will be performing with you at Cezanne?**

Ken Ward on piano, David Craig on bass, Paul Chester on guitar, and the two veteran members of the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Barry Lee Hall, Jr. (arranger/conductor and trumpet) and Rocky White, drums.

**Q. You have a new CD out. Why should people give it a listen?**

A. This, my first CD, is a brief glimpse into the songs and styles that have made me the musician I am today. It gives people a taste of all the styles I love to perform and it's a fun album to listen to. I hope people will go to the album over and over again to just enjoy the music as much as we enjoyed performing and recording those special songs.

You'll find a touch of Texas-style blues in each of the tracks whether they are heart-wrenching Cole Porter songs from the Great American Songbook, or a lush rendition, sung in Portuguese, of a bossa nova classic by Antonio Carlos Jobim.

I believe that the voice is simply another instrument in the ensemble. The piano to the bass and even the drums -- they all speak, all work together -- communicating in this unique language: music.

**Q. Name some current jazz vocalists that are exciting you these days.**

A. I love Bebel Gilberto, Marisa Monte, Diana Krall and of course the classic singers, Ella and Billie. I try and listen to a lot of instrumental music to get a feel for the songs from an instrumentalist's perspective, so I listen to a lot of Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Antonio Carlos Jobim, and Stan Getz.

**Q. What is your favorite song to perform live?**

It depends on my mood, but I would have to say Thelonious Monk's *Round Midnight*. It was very hard to learn and is steeped in jazz mythology. I am moved to tears every time I sing it because it touches me to the core of my soul.

**Details:** 9 p.m.-1 a.m. \$10. [Cezanne](#), 4100 Montrose Blvd. 713-522-9621.

Posted by Sara Cress at April 27, 2007 11:32 AM

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