

Lorraine Feather

Lorraine Feather was born in Manhattan. Her parents named her Billie Jane Lee Lorraine after godmother Billie Holiday, her mother Jane (formerly a big band singer), her mother's ex-roommate Peggy Lee, and the song "Sweet Lorraine." She is the daughter of the late jazz writer Leonard Feather.

The Feathers moved to L.A. when Lorraine was 12; at 18, after two years as a theater arts major at L.A. City College, she returned to New York as an aspiring actress. Some touring, off-Broadway work and the Broadway show *Jesus Christ Superstar* followed, interspersed with waitressing jobs. Frequently out of work, and discouraged by several restaurateurs from continuing a career in the food service industry, she started doing gigs as a singer with Top 40 groups to earn extra cash, then moved back to LA to pursue singing.

Lorraine spent the '80s touring and recording with the vocal trio Full Swing, during which time she started writing lyrics and fell in love with the process. When the group dissolved, she began writing songs for artists such as Patti Austin, Cleo Laine and Diane Schuur, also for film and TV: Disney's *Dinosaurs*, MGM's *All Dogs Go to Heaven*, and the finale of the Opening Ceremonies for the 1996 Olympics, sung by Jessye Norman. She has received seven Emmy nominations as a lyricist. (Her later film work includes *The Jungle Book 2*, *The Princess Diaries 2*, in which Julie Andrews sang her lyrics, and the *My Little Pony* films.)

Meanwhile, Lorraine kept singing—on the *Dick Tracy* soundtrack and Bette Midler's *For the Boys* album, also on albums for Michael Feinstein and Eric Marienthal, and keyboardist Terry Trotter's *Sweeney Todd in Jazz*. Her CD *The Body Remembers*, released in March of 1997, was an offbeat electronic project featuring jazz notables including her husband, drummer Tony Morales, Russ Freeman and David Benoit.

In 1999 Lorraine began a yearlong project, the compositions of Fats Waller with her lyrics and vocals. The album featured pianists Dick Hyman, Mike Lang, and Fats Waller himself (in sampled form). *New York City Drag* was released in July of 2001, received glowing reviews and was played on hundreds of radio stations nationwide. Lorraine completed *Cafe Society* in the summer of 2002; on this CD she set her lyrics to music by Duke Ellington, Johnny Mandel, Don Grusin, Eddie Arkin, Russell Ferrante and David Benoit. In 2003 her *Such Sweet Thunder* CD was released. This project featured the music of Duke Ellington with her added lyrics, and received a four-star review in *Down Beat* and a description of "pure genius" from *Jazz Times*. *Dooji Wooji* was released in early 2005 and also received enthusiastic reviews and wide airplay.

In 2004, Lorraine was commissioned to write the libretto for an opera of Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. Work on this piece is ongoing; excerpts have been performed by American Opera Projects in New York. She has also been working for Canum Entertainment on several theatrical properties in various stages of production, including *The Thief* (from the Russian film, which received an Oscar nomination) and *The Twelve Chairs*. She recently began work as co-producer of an animated short of her Fats Waller reinvention "You're Outa Here," in tandem with "the quintessential independent American animator" George Griffin.

Lorraine's new CD project is *Language*, for Jazzed Media. The songs were written with pianists Shelly Berg (whose *Blackbird* was the most-played jazz album of 2006) and Russell Ferrante (of Yellowjackets); Bill Elliott, Eddie Arkin, Michael B. Nelson, Terry Sampson and Tony Morales. *Language* achieved the #1 spot for jazz CDs both on Amazon and on the Jazz Week airplay charts.

Lorraine and her husband Tony moved from Half Moon Bay, CA to the San Juan Islands, off the coast of Washington State, in 2007—a gorgeous part of the world which boasts the slogan, "Left of America, Right of Canada." They share their home with their two irrepressible rescue mutts, Brava and Sterling.

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