

## Alexis Cole



With a voice praised as “a deep contralto as smooth and dark as the richest espresso” (Jazz Times, November 2007,) award-winning jazz vocalist Alexis Cole has made an impressive impact on audiences ever since she first took the stage as a teenager.

Winner of the 2007 Jazzmobile competition and an award recipient of the Montreux Jazz Vocal Competition, Alexis was cited as "a rising star in the jazz world" by Hot House Magazine.

With six records so far, Alexis Cole is on her way to becoming the next great singer.

Christopher Loudon of Jazz Times says “Cole’s easy sense of swing is strongly reminiscent of Sarah Vaughan”. Ernest Barteldes for AllAboutJazz writes “Cole’s voice is inspired”. While Scott Yanow states “Alexis Cole grows in power, maturity and depth each year. She continues to have unlimited potential.”

Born in New York City, and raised in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Alexis came from a musical family on both sides, so it was only natural that she had begun to perform at the Ritz Hotel in South Beach when still in high school, rapidly earning a reputation as one of the most talented young singers in town. After graduating from the New World School of the Arts- a prestigious performing arts HS and College, She went on to enroll in the University of Miami's Jazz Studies program with the help of

a YoungArts Scholarship, and finished her undergraduate studies at under the tutelage of Rufus Reid and Nancy Marano at William Paterson University in NJ, and her graduate studies with Antonio Hart and David Berkman at Queens College in NY.

Alexis released her first CD in 1999, a duo project with Blue Note recording artist, pianist Harry Pickens, titled for the Bill Evans composition *Very Early*. Later that year she had a residency studying Indian Classical singing at the Jazz India Vocal Institute in Mumbai. In 2004 she released a second CD, *Nearer the Sun* (Canopy Jazz) which renowned jazz critic Scott Yanow lauded as “a particularly strong effort from a jazz singer well worth discovering.” The next year, while holding the Music Director seat at Jan Hus Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, she completed her Masters degree in music, and began to perform frequently at clubs throughout New York City, including The Oak Room, Dizzy's Club, The 55 Bar, The Zinc Bar, Smoke, Smalls and Sweet Rhythm. As her performing career took wing, Alexis traveled across Europe, Asia and South America. She was a guest faculty member at the Berklee College of Music in Quito, Ecuador, and entertained audiences during several three-month-long residencies at the Tableaux Jazz Lounge in Tokyo. Despite her penchant for globetrotting, Alexis managed to release a third CD, *Zingaro*, (Canopy Jazz 2007), which Time Out New York praised as a “disc that will please purists and more adventurous listeners alike.”

Inspired by her travels and her love for bicycling, she dedicated the better part of the next two years to producing *The Greatest Gift - Songs of the Season*, (Motéma Music 2009) a holiday album featuring over 50 musicians including a children's choir, strings, and Cole's father-composer and vocalist/pianist Mark Finkin. The album raises awareness and funds for World Bicycle Relief, an organization that works in developing nations to provide access to independence and livelihood through the power of bicycles. *All About Jazz* describes Cole's singing on the album. "...warm and rich vocals, so emotive they register in the keys of love and gratitude."

Her two recent releases for Venus Records, *Someday My Prince Will Come* (2009) and *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To* (2010) were both produced by Todd Barkan of the world renowned Jazz at Lincoln Center. *Prince*, an album of Disney love songs for grown ups, features a stellar group including Fred Hersch, Matt Wilson and Gregoire Maret, and *You'd Be So Nice* is a collaboration with the band One For All featuring Eric Alexander and David Hazeltine.

She continues to perform regularly at festivals, performing arts centers and jazz clubs throughout the world as well as in her home base of New York City. A dedicated educator, Alexis has taught privately and at the 92nd St. Y in New York City, and is a guest clinician at many universities. Most recently, she's added the position of lead vocalist for the West Point Band's Jazz Knights, the U.S. Military Academy big band, to her eclectic resume.

This is one singer you'll want to pay attention to. As the infamous jazz publication *Swing Journal* states, "We've been waiting for the next great singer to come along, and finally... Alexis."