

SYLVIA CUENCA

Sylvia is an active drummer on the New York jazz scene who is contributing outstanding performances in a variety of situations. She has had the honor of sharing the bandstand with saxophone legend Joe Henderson for 4 years and trumpet legend Clark Terry for 17 years. The Joe Henderson quartet toured frequently in European countries Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Austria, Belgium, England, Switzerland, France, Italy and Germany and venues across the U.S. In a trio setting she performed with Joe Henderson and Charlie Haden in 1989 and with George Mraz in 1994. She performed with the Clark Terry Quintet and Big Band at Village Vanguard, Birdland, Blue Note, Queen Elizabeth 2, Royal Viking, S.S. Norway jazz cruises and clubs, concerts and festivals in the U.S, Europe, the Caribbean and South America. While working with the Clark Terry quintet she had the opportunity to perform with guest artists Al Grey, Red Holloway, Jimmy Heath, Frank Wess, Marian McPartland, Dianne Reeves, Joe Williams and Lou Donaldson to name a few.

Cuenca has also performed with such jazz luminaries as Billy Taylor, Frank Foster's Loud Minority Big Band, Houston Person, Etta Jones, Helen Merrill, John Hicks, Valery Ponomarov, Lew Soloff, James Spaulding, Kenny Barron, Ray Drummond, Michael Brecker, Randy Brecker, George Cables, Hilton Ruiz, Jon Faddis, Eddie Henderson, Gary Bartz, Kenny Drew Jr., Emily Remler, Richie Cole, Dave Stryker, Jessie Davis, Ralph Bowen, Vincent Herring, Paul Bollenback, Geoffrey Keezer, Mark Whitfield, Ralph Moore, Catherine Russell, Dianne Reeves, Dianne Schuur, the European based Vienna Art Orchestra and many others. In 2015 she performed at Dizzy's Jazz at Lincoln Center with Albert "Tootie" Heath's 4 drum set group called "The Whole Drum Truth" which also included drummers Louis Hayes and Joe Saylor.

She was a guest clinician at the Sisters in Jazz Program at the IAJE Convention in NYC and the Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. Cuenca has been a longtime faculty member at the Jazz for Teens and Pre-Teen Program at NJPAC and the Stanford Jazz Workshop in California. She was an artist-in-residence at various universities in the U.S. and Europe with the Clark Terry quintet, Eddie Henderson quartet and as a leader with her own groups. In 2014 she received a B.A. degree in Jazz Performance from Empire State University in NYC.

In 1988 and 1991 Cuenca received jazz performance grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and in 1992 she was a semi-finalist in the Thelonious Monk International Drum Competition.

She has studied with jazz master drummers Adam Nussbaum, Victor Lewis, Keith Copeland and Brazilian drummer Portinho. Sylvia endorses Zildjian Cymbals, Vic Firth sticks and brushes and LP percussion exclusively. She currently resides in New York City.

Career Highlights:

- * 2013 Drum Instructor/Clinician Xinghai International Jazz Festival and Education Forum in Guangzhou, China
- * 2012 Kevin Mahogany Group at Capetown Jazz Festival in South Africa
- * 2012 Performed as leader at the JusJazz International Jazz Festival in India
- * Chicago Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Jon Faddis
- * 2005 Guest Director of Sisters of Jazz Program at Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Center in Washington D.C.
- * Track from "EXIT 13" CD used in episode of HBO's "Sex in the City"
- * Interview in Latina Style Magazine
- * Critical acclaim from major publications for both of her independent releases "The Crossing" and "EXIT 13"
- * Tour of Korea and Japan with Kenny Barron, Ray Drummond and Michael Brecker
- * Sylvia Cuenca Group at 45th Monterey Jazz Festival in 2002
- * Featured on Billy Taylor's "Up and Coming Artists" on CBS Morning Show
- * 2000 & 2015 Sylvia Cuenca Group at Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts