

## L.A. JAZZ SCENE

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**Jean Bartlett, Arts Correspondent**

### **LIVE in Los Angeles**

Jennifer Lee is unquestionably a progressive-minded vocalist, who arranges, composes, and plays piano and guitar. However, when singing, she takes listeners back to the era of classic pop and jazz vocalists. When singing at Catalina's backed by a trio consisting of bassist John Leftwich, saxophonist Tripp Sprague, and guitarist Steve Cotter, she was reminiscent of Peggy Lee, Mary Ford, June Christy and a hip version of Dinah Shore. Lee though, puts an undated spin on the style with extended versions of classic songs. "Night and Day" was a perfect example, featuring her appealing breathy vocals and a refreshing solo by Sprague. As a treat to the audience, she dusted off forgotten classic "Charmaine" to give it an astonishing beautiful rendition, with only bass and guitar accompaniment. Her cool tone remained in pleasant mid-range throughout most of her set, but became brighter for a much-needed change during Ellington's staple "Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me". Additionally, her trio exhibited verve with Cotter's lyrical solo and Sprague's peppy playing accenting. Leftwich who throughout the set provided a fluid foundation for the others to flow, shined with sultry playing on "The Inchworm". Lee displayed her scatting and spoken word skill, while also soaring in higher registers. Reinforcing her essence, the singer featured "Jaywalkin'" the title track of her CD that showcased her affinity for vintage material and the trio's talent.

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