

**BELLA
BLUE**

Opie Bellas Biography

"I come from a family of painters, writers, actors, designers, and singers, so I guess a passion for expressing myself is in my blood."

This passion of Opie Bellas, a jazz singer and so much more, has grabbed the attention of producers, bookers, and fans around the world. The packed concert halls in Capetown, South Africa, where Opie performed in 2004 and 2006 are evidence of this. Serge Jeannet, the producer of these concerts, had heard of Opie, listened to her CDs and fell in love with her style.

"Serge is a true patron of the arts," Opie commented. "I wasn't exactly a household name in Cape Town, yet he had the confidence to book me and fly me half way around the world." She proved to be such a success with her appearances at Jazz at the Nassau in 2004 that Jeannet insisted she return the following year. She'll return again in 2007 under the auspices of the Jazz Foundation and perform with the University of Cape Town Big Band in both Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

In 2003 Opie performed at the Queensland (Australia) Jazz and Arts Festival. Her jazz travels have also taken her to Vals, Switzerland, and to Osaka, Fukai, and Kanzawa, Japan.

A singer just doesn't pop into these cities and ask, "Hey, have you got any gigs for me?" What is instead at work in Opie Bellas' international career is the effort she has made to establish a reputation as a jazz singer people want to pay attention to.

This effort began at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, where Opie trained as a classical vocalist. "I learned how powerful the human voice can be in expressing the full range of emotions. When technique and heart come together, that's what singing is all about for me." Listen to her CD "**How Do You Keep the Music Playing**" for example, and you will hear a singer gifted with both delectable phrasing and feeling. Her CD "**Faces**" was produced by and recorded at the Grammy Award winning Manchester Craftsmen's Guild and went on to hit the Top 50 on the JazzWeek charts in the United States.

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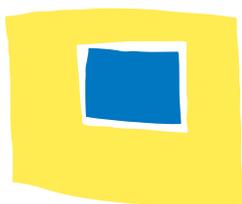
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Her recording, **Live For Life** features members of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Jazz Quartet and caught the discerning ear of New York music scholar, author and WNYC presenter Jonathan Schwartz who gives her recording his highest rating. In 2004 she performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra as part of a tribute to the music of Fred Rogers. You remember Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, don't you? Keeping company with Opie were Renee Fleming, Tommy Tune, and John Lithgow. Good company, indeed. Speaking of that TV Neighborhood and great jazz in Pittsburgh, Opie had a grand time gigging with the late Johnny Costa, the long-time musical director of Fred Rogers' show and a wonderful jazz pianist. "Johnny floors me," Opie has said. "He always reminded me of Art Tatum."

As we traverse the globe with her we realize that Opie is as comfortable in the concert hall as she is in more intimate clubs. "I love singing to large audiences, and I think my classical training has let me be at ease when working with symphony orchestras." Those intimate clubs on Opie's resume have included Danny's Skylight Room in New York City, where the venerable Blossom Dearie makes her musical home, Town Hall, The Plush Room, and Yoshi's, the West Coast's premier jazz club.

Opie's talents have also extended to an impressive range of voice work. She has provided an array of voices for Leapfrog Learning Toys and has also delighted our kids by playing a variety of characters for numerous recordings of children's books for MacMillan Publishing Company. She's been heard on the California Lottery TV commercial, and the astute fans of National Public Radio welcomed her as the host of its Concert Matinee for a number of years.

Ms. Bellas has also been known to play a mean game of tennis. But relax. In concert halls, clubs, and in the recording studio she serves up nothing but love.

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