

Kiki Dee & Carmelo Luggeri: An Acoustic Experience – The Customs House, South Shields

Reviewer: Steve Burbridge

The Public Reviews Rating: ★★★★★

Kiki Dee may never escape the legacy of her 1976 chart-topping duet with Elton John, ‘Don’t Go Breaking My Heart’ but, nevertheless, she is a singer-songwriter whose contribution to the music industry cannot – and must not – be underestimated.

Her latest acoustic concert demonstrates the versatility and integrity of an artist who, despite the fact that she no longer sells-out vast arena’s, still has much to offer an industry that is becoming ever-more formulaic and increasingly driven by commercial success rather than creativity and talent.

The concert combines a mixture of Dee’s own material, hits from her back catalogue and collaborations with her musical partner and producer, Carmelo Luggeri, from their two most recent albums – ‘Where Rivers Meet’ and ‘Walk of Faith’ – with stunning cover versions of hits by artists including The Lotus Eaters (The First Picture of You) Frank Sinatra (A Very Good Year), Buddy Holly (True Love Ways) and Kate Bush (Running Up That Hill). The result is an intimate evening that encompasses pop, soul, ballads, swing and rock.

Of course, many in the audience secretly yearned for Dee to perform the classics that cemented her status as a star performer, such as the sensuously beautiful ‘Amoureuse’, ‘I Got The Music In Me’ and, of course, ‘Don’t Go Breaking My Heart’. When she did, they were rapturously received.

However, Kiki Dee has constantly developed and moved on and this is reflected in her more recent, though lesser-known compositions. Numbers including Everybody Falls (Habit of a Lifetime), ‘Like Nobody’s Child’ and ‘Soul Man’ certainly have the potential to be hits – if only they were given the radio playtime.

Dee does not need to hide her sensational voice behind the might of a full orchestra and, instead, relies on only the backing of Carmelo Luggeri’s guitar, her own keyboard and the vocals of Annabel Lamb.

Kiki’s ‘acoustic experience’ is one that, for all the right reasons, will linger long in my memory. Truly Terrific.

Kiki Dee & Carmelo Luggeri - 'A Place Where I Can Go' - Album Review

Daniel Falconer – Female First Magazine

Kiki Dee has cause to celebrate in 2013. It marks 50 years in music for the English singer, who's most notably recognised for her 1976 hit 'Don't Go Breaking My Heart' with Sir Elton John.

The early 1990's saw Kiki join forces with Carmelo Luggeri - talented songwriter, producer and guitarist who produced some bonus tracks for 'The Very Best Of Kiki Dee' - a compilation album.

Hitting it off they played acoustic concerts side by side, and in the past 18 years have toured the UK and Europe.

'Sweeter Rain' shows off exactly what the pairing can do when together and at their best, with strong strums and tender, hypnotising vocals reeling you in from the very start.

'Sidesteppin' (With A Soulman) is another flawless offering, and the track will be released as a single in October this year - marking Kiki's 40th single release.

The timeless duo are obvious experts of their craft, and they put their best feet forward in this CD that is sure to become a classic.

Kiki Dee & Carmelo Luggeri.

Kiki Dee-Lightful

Review By Pat Thompson. The Lincolnshire Echo

I was mesmerised by Kiki Dee and so too, it would seem, was the capacity audience at the Trinity Arts Centre, Gainsborough.

The reason? It was part of Kiki's national Almost Naked tour and although a technical hitch nearly forced the abandonment of one piece, it was sorted out and we were treated to a great rock number.

Kiki is one of this country's most underrated singers. In musical parlance, she is a singer's singer and she can match anyone in the business for vocal dexterity and sheer gut-wrenching emotion.

Accompanied by Carmelo Luggeri on acoustic guitar, for two hours she wove her way through many new songs co-written with Carmelo over the past 18 months, but there was one

or two "old favourites" including her 1970s collaboration with Elton John, Don't Go Breaking My Heart, which was given a new arrangement by Carmelo.

It doesn't matter what Kiki sings - her rendition of Joni Mitchell's Carey was stunning - it's all delivered with the same effortless perfection.

She finished the concert with her very first self-penned composition Loving and Free - my own personal favourite - and brought the house down.

Anyone who wasn't there missed a great performance by a capable, talented and gutsy lady. Terrific stuff.