

Winnipeg Free Press

Singer treats audience to romantic afternoon

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Carol Weisman

COOL Concerts

Berney Theate

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4 stars out of 5

FROM American funk to Brazilian rhythms (a lot of Brazilian rhythms) to pop to **jazz** to the witty lyrics of Dave Frishberg, Carol Welsman captured her audience yesterday afternoon.

The singer/pianist relied heavily on her latest CD, *The Language of Love*, for a romantic afternoon of music, the first of two shows she performed yesterday in the COOL Concerts series.

Welsman effortlessly straddles the pop/**jazz** spectrum. She walked onstage to a funk beat laid down by her backing trio of guitar, bass and drums and scatted, standing at a microphone, before sitting at the piano to open the show with *Taking A Chance On Love*, the opening tune from the CD, a theme album tracing the stages of a love affair.

The singer filled seats for her show in what has been a lacklustre season of sorts with many empty seats at earlier Sunday afternoon shows.

Welsman took time to praise Brazilian guitarist and arranger Oscar Castro-Neves, who produced *The Language of Love*; a man she had first come across as a youngster listening to Sergio Mendes recordings.

She also dedicated Cole Porter's *Just One of Those Things* to the late Izzy **Asper**, the founder of the **jazz** series.

Many of the pieces were delicate, romantic tunes such as *A Fool I Know* and the crowd-pleaser *A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square*, as well as Sting's *Every Breath You Take*.

A jazzier *Too Close For Comfort*, which ended her first set, took things up a notch from the laid-back loving of the other songs.

Welsman also sang in French and Italian and let her bandmates strut their stuff on mainly elegant solos. Bassist Kieran Overs is no stranger to Canadian **jazz** fans, or performing here with Welsman, and he turned in some tasty solo and ensemble work.

Guitarist David Occhipinti played some elegant solos when called on, and played great rhythm guitar behind Welsman. Drummer Davide DiRenzo played everything from soft brush work to Brazilian percussion to full-blown drum solos.

Welsman is as adept as a pianist as she is as a singer, especially when she's in a romantic mood.

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