

# Harmonious Creature (Posi-tone 2014) *National and International Press*



## SELECT NATIONAL PRESS:

### Los Angeles Times



## Best jazz albums | Sarah Manning, 'Harmonious Creature'

Sarah Manning, "Harmonious Creature" (Posi-Tone): Venturing into wide open spaces that occasionally recall the folk-tilted chamber jazz of guitarist Bill Frisell, Manning's sound is aided in part by the nimble backing of occasional Frisell sideman Eyvind Kang, whose viola forms a harmonious counterweight to Manning's saxophone. A serrated cover of Neil Young's "On the Beach" and Gillian Welch's lilting "I Dream a Highway" further underscore her broad, borderless vision. – *Chris Barton for the LA Times*

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## Sarah Manning "Copland on Cornelia Street" *Harmonious Creature (Posi- Tone, 2014)*

This entire album is worth checking out, and this opening track is so wonderfully constructed. Sarah can obviously play the saxophone very

well, but her attention to composition, orchestration and pacing reflects a rare maturity from someone so young. There are elements of Western classical music seamlessly mingling with Eastern aesthetics. Mixing modernity with the ancient is a lofty aspiration, and Sarah is well on her way. (*Rudresh Mahanthappa, Artist's Choice: Some great players you may not have heard yet*)

# **JazzTimes**<sup>®</sup>

## *Feature Article June 2014 Saxophone Issue*

“Sarah Manning Creates Art Out of Her Environment” by Aidan Levy

<http://bit.ly/1tVIT4I>

“On Sarah Manning’s fourth album as a leader, *Harmonious Creature* (Posi-Tone), the whole is greater than the sum of its disparate influences and ideas—a New England barn owl, a Bernard Herrmann score, Aaron Copland, Gillian Welch, tricky changes in time, atmospheric soundscapes.”



*Editor’s Pick March 2014 by Davis Inman:* <http://bit.ly/1xFQOOQj>

“Manning offers an enchanting but succinct version of Welch’s expansive, 14-minute tune, creating a haunting interpretation that lingers in the listener’s mind long after the music stops.”



*4 Star Review April 2014 Print Issue by Brad Farberman*

"What's not to like about alto saxophonist Sarah Manning's *Harmonious Creature*?...the quintet's take on Gillian Welch's "I Dream a Highway" is breathtaking. Beginning with just Hart's resounding low end and the leader's rich, emotional, sax the sad but hopeful ballad keeps you waiting for a beat that never comes."

## Lucid Culture

*Album and Live Concert Reviews by Delarue, Jan and Feb 2014*

“Sarah Manning Takes a Sensationally Successful Shot at Chamber Jazz”

<http://bit.ly/1rDMgW0>

"Sarah Manning is to the alto sax what JD Allen is to the tenor: even in a world of rugged individualists, she stands out...Her bright, defenestrating, Jackie McLean-esque tone, angst-fueled crescendos and stunningly uneasy tunesmithing also set her a step ahead of the pack...It may be early in the year, but her new album *Harmonious Creature* threatens to be the best of 2014."

**“Sarah Manning Airs Out a Great Album’s Worth of Tunes at I-Beam”**

<http://bit.ly/1yK6tiA>

“...she showed off several of the kinetic, sometimes aching intense compositions she’d come up with there, taken from her brilliant new album *Harmonious Creature*. Onstage, Manning’s tone is less brassy and more nuanced than it tends to be in the studio; attackwise, she went from a wail to a wisp and often back up again, precise and purposeful.”



***eMusic pick of the week January 29, 2014***

<http://bit.ly/1sM0MLA>

(link is to additional review by eMusic writer Dave Sumner)

"Melodies with a back-porch languor that sometimes jump out of their chair and go off and running, harmonies that melt into the skin like rays of sun, and rhythms that develop an amicable chatter, never losing their conversational demeanor. Just a lovely album, rich with textures."



***Critic’s Pick for Concerts in Feb and Oct 2014***

<http://bit.ly/1wKDGuO>

“We hadn’t heard of saxist-composer Sarah Manning until recently, but now that we’ve checked out *Harmonious Creature* — a recent Posi-Tone set featuring piquant themes, an ambient textural feel and the leader’s distinctive liquid tone — we feel like we have a lot of catching up to do.”



***Feature Review/Interview by Burning Ambulance  
(Phil Freeman) Jan 2014***

<http://bit.ly/1tn1pPt>

“*Harmonious Creature* is a unique, even slightly weird album; it’s definitely jazz, but there are elements of hillbilly music, Jewish music, modern classical, and more. It’s a unique statement from a composer confident in her own voice and wise in choosing collaborators to realize her ideas.”

## all about jazz

### *Harmonious Creature Review by Dan Bilawsky Jan 2014*

<http://bit.ly/1q59h4J>

“Sarah Manning proves to be a harmonious creature herself, capable of balancing order and chaos, shadows and light, and the simple and complex without issue. In an age when many a critic has bemoaned the homogenization of saxophonists on the scene, Sarah Manning is proof that personality can still triumph over standardization; Manning stands apart from the sea of sound-alikes.”



### *S. Victor Aaron's Mid-Year Best of 2014*

*(Modern and Mainstream Jazz)*

<http://bit.ly/1iBOasE>

### *Review January 2014*

“Manning paces her solo like a rock guitarist, even gets gritty and primal like Young has been known to get on guitar.”

<http://bit.ly/1DCMbZn>

## DOWNTOWN

*Music* GALLERY

### *Review by Bruce Lee Gallanter July 2014*

<http://bit.ly/1q5cS2N>

“The spirit at the center of this disc is that of a strong singer/songwriter who writes songs about things we all feel or relate to. **However, there is no singing here** but the vibe is similar, heartfelt and exquisitely crafted. I like the way Ms. Manning's sax captures that great Neil Young bittersweet rock guitar tone that many of us know and love.”

## SELECT INTERNATIONAL PRESS:



*February 2014 Review by Peter Bacon*

<http://bit.ly/1xG5fUv>

“Manning’s own playing can be keening and strident but always suitably so, and she is always searching fresh melodic paths – listen to the sax/drums section of *Floating Bridge*, with Jennings pushing hard and the leader thriving on the drive...A very striking album indeed.”



*Culture Jazz Review (France) January 2014*

<http://bit.ly/1rXiv3w>

“Avec ce quatrième disque en tant que leader, Sarah Manning signe une œuvre forte, remarquablement équilibrée. Aux audaces harmoniques répondent des formes plus conventionnelles comme le blues final, confondant de simplicité apparente et pourtant si personnel et original.”



*AAJ Italia Review by Alberto Bazzurro September 2014*

<http://bit.ly/1q5j6Q9>

“Ce lo dice con chiarezza questo suo ultimo lavoro, inciso all'inizio del 2013 alla testa del proprio quintetto, entro cui un ruolo quasi altrettanto rilevante della leader gioca il violista Etvind Kang, specificatamente per l'impasto (per certi versi il contrasto) timbrico – e conseguentemente dinamico – che il suo strumento sa generare col sax alto, appunto, di Sarah Manning, acidulo, asprigno, spesso turgido, con più di una similitudine – ovviamente non solo strumentale – con uno dei numi tutelari del jazz contemporaneo, Tim Berne.”

