

RECORDING JANN RUTHERFORD'S THE SCENTED GARDEN

by Dave Goodman*

This article appears on Dave Goodman's website and can be read there at this link <https://davegoodman.com.au/blogs/blog/posts/career-highlight-trio-with-jann-rutherford-and-paul-cutlan>

In early 2003, Jann Rutherford, Roger Manins, Paul Cutlan, Craig Scott and I went into Sony Studios in East Sydney where Ross A'hern recorded what would be Jann's final album, *The Scented Garden*. Jann was one of the best and most interesting jazz pianists and composers I've ever met. Being blind since birth, her ability is all that much more remarkable.



L-R, Roger Manins, Paul Cutlan, Dave Goodman, Jann Rutherford, Craig Scott performing at The Excelsior in Surry Hills a few days after the "Scented Garden" recording session... PHOTO CREDIT KAREN STEAINS

**Jazz critic John Clare has described Dave Goodman as 'one of the leading drummers in the country' and '[one of] the most intriguing drummers recording anywhere'. At just 18, Dave received an invitation to join the Mike Nock Quartet and, at 20, came second in the Wangaratta Jazz Festival's prestigious National Jazz Awards. Today, he is one of Australia's most important jazz drummers.*

At the time of this recording though, very ill from advanced cancer, Jann was unable to speak and was struggling to maintain physical strength, so we knew that everything on the album had to be the first take – warts and all. We recorded an album's worth of Jann's original material that day, knowing that this may be the last chance we had to play together as Jann was scheduled to fly back to New Zealand as soon as we were done, to be with her mother and to rest.



Dave Goodman: delighted when Jann suggested recording a free duet recording with him, the result being “Keep Following Me” which was included on the album...PHOTO CREDIT HAMISH TA-MÉ

Jann spoke more clearly through the piano that day than I'd ever heard her and, as she was unable to speak clearly with her voice, I decided early on in the session that I would get all the information I needed purely and simply by listening to her piano playing.

At the end of the session, I was delighted when Jann suggested recording a free duet recording with me, so we played what's now called *Keep Following Me* on the album. I was astonished by what I heard coming from the piano during that take because, to my ears, it sounded like Arnold Schoenberg had crept in and sat on the piano bench and given his best and most sophisticated material. But it was Jann as I'd never heard her before and it blew my mind. I thought that was our last chance to play together until Paul Cutlan, who was still present in the control room, spoke to us through the headphones saying “I want to come and do one with you!” So Paul set his soprano saxophone up and came back into the studio to play one more with us as a trio.

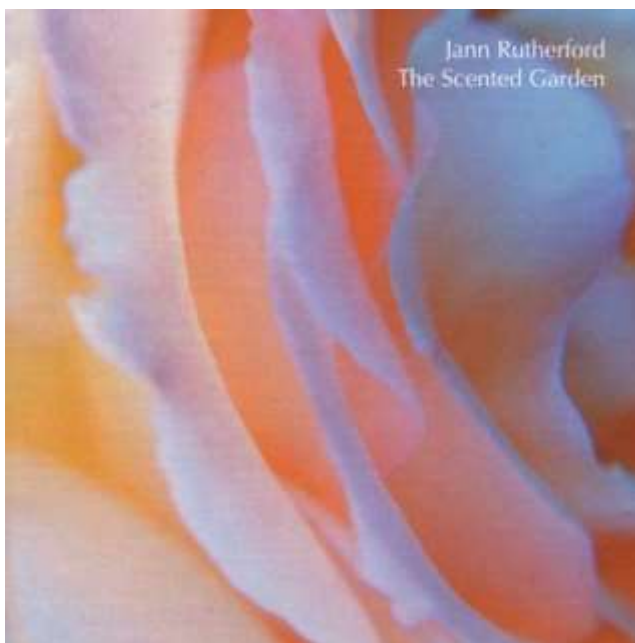


Paul Cutlan came back into the studio and, on soprano saxophone, played another tune with Goodman and Rutherford, resulting in the piece “And A Good Time Was Had By All”, which appears on the album [Trans Tasman: A Journey Into New Zealand Jazz](#)

The result wound up as a piece with a name that resonates with an element of truth as recording it was one of the highlights of my playing career: *And A Good Time Was Had By All*. Unfortunately, the track didn't make the album, but it is available on the album: *Trans Tasman: A Journey Into New Zealand Jazz* - I hope you enjoy hearing it as much as we enjoyed playing it.

We did get one more chance to play together a few days after the recording as the Jazzgroove Association kindly opened up a spot for the band to play at The Excelsior in Surry Hills where Karen Steains took the above photo.

Sadly, Jann Rutherford passed away at home in New Zealand about six weeks after this was recorded.



Jann Rutherford's final album “The Scented Garden”, released in 2003...