



Seattle Gay News

SEATTLE'S LGBT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

The 2010 Earshot Jazz Festival by E. Joyce Glasgow – SGN A&E Writer

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There were lots more vocalists on the schedule this year. New York-based British vocalist **Tessa Souter**, who played at Tula's on October 29 and 30, is one of those performers who explores beautiful, lesser-heard material and has superb taste in composers, including compositions by musical titans Wayne Shorter and Milton Nascimento on her set lists. Souter

distinguishes herself as a memorable and unique singer, finding her niche by writing lyrics for instrumental pieces and generally singing more unusual songs. She has written sensitive, bittersweet lyrics to Shorter's beautiful instrumental tribute to his wife, Ana Maria, from his 1974 Native Dancer album. (Ana Maria Shorter was tragically killed, along with the couple's niece, in the 1996 TWA Flight 800 plane crash).

Souter's fascinating set choices included "Fragile" by Sting, "Here's to Life," "Afro Blue," and Cole Porter's "Night and Day," with a Middle Eastern twist. Her thoughtful choice of material was very entertaining and reflected her commitment to her work. She was backed up by a superb trio of Northwest musicians: John Stowell (guitar), Jeff Johnson (bass) and Mark Ivester (drums). It is a testament to their talent, experience, and professionalism that they sounded like they had been playing with Souter for years, but had actually just met her before their Tula's gig.

“She has a lovely voice, a comfortable, understated, confident presence, and easily communicates with her audience.”