

CHARITO

P R O F I L E

Distinctively a most prominent jazz vocalist in Japan with multi-awarded albums recorded and released internationally, Charito's artistry continues to establish its global presence with her recent and forthcoming tours in Europe, Asia, North and Latin America.

Her highly personal and expressive vocal style incorporates the breadth of her musical interests, from straight-ahead soulful ballads to hard-swinging grooves and improvisational adventures. Her approach is fresh and invigorating, paying tribute to the jazz tradition while interacting and exploring, always seeking to express herself in the moment.

In Ms. Nancy Wilson's words, "The first time I heard Charito, I physically and emotionally embraced her and thought myself BEAUTIFUL, that came from the heart and the soul. She has a warm way of presenting a song and she represents what a singer really is, a song stylist." This Girl (1990)

A GREAT PERFORMER

1990-1994: Her career began its highlights after her first album This Girl was launched by Nippon Crown, being the first foreign artist under their label. This opened more doors for her followed by her next albums commercial successes.

More than anything, her experiences working with top notch musicians in the likes of Harry Whitaker, Alex Blake and Wallace Rooney on Swing My Way (1991/NIPPON CROWN), Maurice White on Shades of Love (1992/NIPPON CROWN), collaboration with Cornell Dupree, Buddy Williams, David Espinozza on Love of My Life (1993/NIPPON CROWN), added prestige to her work and has helped in making her a figure in today's music world.

In projecting herself as an artist, she included in her albums two famous Philippine love songs partly to affirm her roots as a Filipino. She promotes a more positive image of her country and continuously helps bring about cultural awareness through music. For her efforts, she was honored with an award of commendation as Ambassador of Goodwill, in acknowledgment of her support to the promotional activities of the Philippine department of Tourism in Japan.

1995-1996: This talented artist has already entranced the North American audience during a tour in Chicago, New York, Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal as vocalist for the Asian Jazz All Stars headed by Terumasa Hino, Japan's foremost jazz trumpet player. They also toured Korea, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Taiwan, capped by a performance at the Mt. Fuji Jazz Festival held in Yokohama Japan.

Charito also performed for the first time before a 70,000 audience at the Montreal Jazz Festival in July 1996 (a first for a Philippine artist). This was followed by the release of her album Forevermore (1995/NIPPON CROWN) and later in Canada and the US under Lost Chart label making her mark as a world class act.

1997: She was part of the Lost Chart Ensemble, a French Canadian group for a tour in Canada and for a second time at the Montreal Jazz Festival. During this period she did recordings for two new albums, A Time for Love (1998/LOST CHART) and To the Beat of Your Heart (1999/TOP CHART) for international market.

1998: She toured several major cities in China (Beijing, Shanghai, Dalian, Chengdu) as featured vocalist of the Lost Chart Ensemble for the Beijing Jazz Festival showcase, followed by shows in Tokyo, as part of the promotional tour.

1999: She performed at the Dewan Filharmonik Petronas in Kuala Lumpur with ASIANA, a group formed by Jeremy Monteiro composed of some of the best Asian musicians in both jazz and traditional instruments. They played an interesting blend of music mixing ethnic sounds with jazz harmony and improvisation.

2000: was highlighted by several performances outside Japan. She was vocalist for World Jazz All Stars, a group of renowned jazz musicians formed by Terumasa Hino for inaugural concerts and workshop series held at the newly opened LG Arts Center in Seoul, Korea.

2001: was a turning point for Charito when her attention was diverted towards charity work. She formed Because We Care Group using music as the key channel to take meaningful actions and effective programs to increase awareness among concerned citizens by helping those in need, especially the children. Charito has since then held annual concerts and charity shows where proceeds have gone to various centers and organizations working for children in the Japan and the Philippines.

2002: brought on more international collaboration at the Jazz Club in Hongkong, performances with Lonnie Plaxico and his New York band, gigs with Brazilian Paulo Gomez and friends, highlighted with a special guest performance with the world renowned Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra.

2003: They Say It's Wonderful (2003/CT MUSIC) was released , which she co-produced with Lonnie Plaxico in New York featuring jazz greats Mulgrew Miller, Lewis Nash and Jeremy Pelt. In this recording, Charito once again ventured into a new challenge using unique arranging ideas she helped conceive and then written by Manabu Ohishi, the music director in her band. This year was also highlighted with performances at the Kuchan Jazz Festival, Asahi Jazz Festival and NHK session 505.

2004: marked a new turning point in Charito's career when she teamed up with world famous musician Ivan Lins and released the album Non-Stop To Brazil "Charito meets Ivan Lins" (2004/CT MUSIC) recorded in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Thick, rich, sensuous - jazz-pop vocal arrangements by Ivan and Charito makes this Afro Latin rhythm album very special. This album won her the Swing Journal's Gold Disc Award.

This same year she was invited by and performed with Jan Jarczyk's group at the Krakow Jazz festival in Poland representing Japan. She was also invited as faculty for the first time at the Chodziej International Jazz Workshop teaching Polish and international students. Her work earned her much credit and has certainly opened a lot of doors for in Europe, she has been officially invited to do more concerts and to be part of the workshop in the coming years. Charito runs her own voice workshop in Tokyo.

2005: Charito's career was off to a good start with the Best Vocal Award 2004 by the Swing Journal for her album Non-Stop to Brazil. But Charito is not one to rest on her laurels. Charito continues to perfect her craft and wow audiences in Japan and internationally.

Charito and her Latin Jazz Funk Band was featured as one of the highlights at the Tokyo Jazz 2005 at Tokyo Big Sight where many big name artists from Japan and around the world converge in one stage to bring a dream performance crossing generations and borders. She also performed as part of the Super Unit Session led by Herbie Hancock with Marcus Miller, Ivan Lins among others.

2006: brought on great excitement with her New York recording with the Manhattan Jazz Orchestra. Arranged and conducted by David Matthews, this album was the very first MJO collaboration with a vocalist.

Nica's Dream (2006/CT MUSIC) CD launch in June also marked the first club gig ever performed by MJO with Charito. She also guested at some shows for their SWING, SWING, SWING Japan Tour 2006, highlighting at the performance in Suntory Hall in Tokyo. This album received great reviews and was awarded the Swing Journal Gold Disc.

This year she also performed for the first time in Augsburg, Germany for the Augustana Hall's jazz series with overwhelming reviews. Here she also conducted a master class workshop for voice students at the Downtown Music Institute. Germany has warmly welcomed Charito and plans to invite her again for festivals and events in the coming year.

2007: Nica's Dream received Swing Journal's Gold Disc Award and won the Best Vocal Award 2006. This special year was marked by her ever growing engagements abroad and was invited to perform at the Philippine International Jazz and Arts Festival 2007; at summer jazz festivals in Th?oule-sur-mer and at the Abbaye de Fontdouce in France with the Alain Brunet Quartet; a concert with the Musikwerkstatt Bigband at the Kurhaus Parktheater in Germany. In September, she released the CD "NOW AND ALWAYS", a special album edition featuring Charito's new group called Music Virus.

2008: Her music gives her wings to travel to so many different parts of the world. She was a highlight artist at the Philippine International Festival; toured and performed in Russia for the first time at "Jazz at the Old Fortress International Jazz Festival" and the "Baikal Waves International Jazz Festival"; featured special artist at the Atlanta Jazz Festival and the National Black Arts Jazz Festival 2008 with the Bernard Linnette Quartet.

Her latest album "Watch What Happens", recorded in France with the great maestro Michel Legrand was just released on August 20 receiving great reviews.

A rare, history making collaboration with Michel Legrand, Charito's "Watch What Happens", succeeds in capturing the essence of the great maestro's timeless pieces. A mix of strong melodies and provocative arrangements, this album contains interpretations of famous movie themes, "Umbrellas of Cherbourg" "Windmills of Your Mind" and "Summer of '42." Particularly impressive are Charito and Michel's vocal duet numbers Pieces of Dreams and Quand On S'Aime. Recorded in such an intimate way, this recording confirms Michel's recognition of Charito's vocal stylings. "A beautiful and spontaneous expression of life", were his exact words of praise.

This same year she toured extensively for the first time in Switzerland with Juerg Morgenthaler's J.M. Rhythm Four and with the Kay Fischer quartet in Germany. She later joined Alex Nakhimovsky's group with Craig Handy and performed together at jazz clubs in New York.

2009: Performed and held a vocal workshop at the 4th Philippine International Jazz and Arts Festival in Manila. In February, her CD "Watch What Happens" was a featured CD at Starbucks stores all over Japan. She performed for Musique en Polynesie "Jazz aux Iles festival" in Tahiti with French musicians Alain Brunet and Alain Mayeras. This year, they traveled more together to promote the new CD in the United States headlining at Yoshi's Oakland and Catalina's in LA. In October, they performed for Australia's Jazz A Vienne Sydney Festival and the Manly Festival. During this period of back and forth traveling, she was also recording her next album produced by Harvey Mason. She was headliner for the 5th Annual Fil-Am Jazz Festival LA for the first time with outstanding fellow Philippine artists held in December.

2010: Charito was invited to showcase her Michel Legrand repertoire with the Alain Brunet quartet at the DOHA JAZZ FESTIVAL "When East meets West" held at the Qatar National Theatre; in co-operation with the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage, as part of the "Doha, Capital of Arab Culture 2010".

Excitement brews as Charito's latest album HEAL THE WORLD - Charito sings Michael Jackson produced by Harvey Mason prepares for its release on July 7, 2010. Already a Swing Journal Gold Disc, the album takes Charito to a whole new level and endless possibilities.