

## KURT ELLING

Kurt Elling is among the world's foremost jazz vocalists. He has been named "Male Singer of the Year" by the Jazz Journalists Association on half a dozen occasions in the past ten years, and during the same interval has been the perennial winner of the DownBeat Critics Poll. He is also a Grammy winner, and every record he has made has been Grammy nominated.

Elling's rich baritone spans four octaves and features both astonishing technical mastery and emotional depth. His command of rhythm, texture, phrasing, and dynamics is more like a virtuoso jazz instrumentalist than a vocalist. His repertoire includes original compositions and modern interpretations of standards, all of which are springboards for inspired improvisation, scatting, spoken word, and poetry.

Declared *The New York Times*, "Elling is the standout male vocalist of our time." Said *The Washington Post*, "Since the mid-1990s, no singer in jazz has been as daring, dynamic or interesting as Kurt Elling. With his soaring vocal flights, his edgy lyrics and sense of being on a musical mission, he has come to embody the creative spirit in jazz." He has been featured in profiles for *CBS Sunday Morning*, *CNN*, on Ramsey Lewis's *Legends of Jazz*, and in hundreds of publications.

Elling has recorded and/or performed with an array of artists, including Terence Blanchard, Dave Brubeck, Jon Hendricks, Charlie Hunter, Al Jarreau, Christian McBride, and Kurt Rosenwinkel. He served as the Artist-in-Residence for the Singapore Music and Monterey Jazz Festivals. He has also written multi-disciplinary works for The Steppenwolf Theatre and the City of Chicago. The Obama Administration's first state dinner featured Elling in a command performance.

Elling is a renowned artist of *vocalese*—the writing and performing of words over recorded improvised jazz solos. The natural heir to jazz pioneers Eddie Jefferson, King Pleasure, and Jon Hendricks, Elling has set his own lyrics to the improvised solos of Wayne Shorter, Keith Jarrett, and Pat Metheny. He often incorporates images and references from writers such as Rilke, Rumi, Neruda, and Proust into his work. The late poet and Bollingen Prize winner Robert Creeley wrote, "Kurt Elling takes us into a world of sacred particulars. His words are informed by a powerful poetic spirit."

In 2010 Elling completed an extensive tour with the Monterey Jazz Festival All-Stars and staged *Passion World*, a commissioned event for Jazz at Lincoln Center with French accordion virtuoso Richard Galliano, singing songs of love and loss in five languages.

*The Gate*, Elling's much anticipated new recording, opened 2011. Produced by the legendary Don Was (The Rolling Stones, Bonnie Raitt, Bob Dylan), Elling's latest offering features inspired interpretations of songs by The Beatles, Herbie Hancock, Miles Davis, and Stevie Wonder. Certainly among his strongest albums, *The Gate* may well be the finest of his career.

**Julie Porter** ◦ **Concord Music Group** ◦ **310.385.4234** ◦ **[jporter@concordrecords.com](mailto:jporter@concordrecords.com)**