

For immediate release

With “Open the Door”, Anna Laura Quinn presents to her listeners not merely an album, but a steady, thoughtful exhibition of art that is at times painted, at others sculpted, and, on occasion, found riding on the invisible particles and seconds that join each moment to the next.

NEW YORK CITY, N.Y. – With a voice rightly praised as a “**well-worked instrument**” whose stylings and energy “**bring new vitality to classic tunes by the likes of Cole Porter and Duke Ellington,**” (Holly Devon, ANTIGRAVITY Magazine) vocalist and arranger **Anna Laura Quinn** steps forward boldly with ***Open the Door***, a selection of nine deeply emotive, introspective, and textured arrangements that stand as landmark tributes to how music - and the musicians and experiences she has encountered - has profoundly shaped her into the person, musician, and creator that she is today.

Freshly energized by both **the knowledge gained from her Master’s degree** in Jazz Studies at the University of New Orleans and the rich **experiential history and tradition** gained from consistently performing within the city itself, Quinn sought to chronicle the development of her musicianship up to this point while simultaneously paving a way for her to step through the threshold into a future of further creative brilliance. Soon enough, *Open the Door* took form. With the initial recordings made in February and March 2020 and three more arrangements completed and tracked between March and July 2021, the music presented on *Open the Door* provides **a unique microcosm into the dynamic musical and empathetic growth of an artist.**

The **album’s title**, *Open the Door*, comes from **a featured track of the same name** and stands to solidify the concept of paying homage to Quinn’s influences – in this case **Betty Carter**. For Quinn, however, the significance stretches beyond mere homage; *Open the Door* perfectly **describes what music has done in a holistic sense** for her life. “The title speaks to the way that performing music has truly opened doors for me,” Quinn says. “To greater self-understanding and empowerment; to personal connection; to community; and ultimately, to the creation and cultivation of tremendous joy in my life.” After the inimitable isolation experienced in the United States and the wider world due to the lockdowns that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic, music’s ability to open doors held an even greater magnitude. “Making music and art is what propels me forward, helping me channel my feelings, know myself better, and lean into the unknown, all while nurturing my deep sense of community here in New Orleans,” Quinn says. Through the careful and **intentional curation of this album’s musicians, compositions, and lyrical content**, Quinn has presented an artistic statement that is distinct to her and her vision, at the crux of which stands the album’s title track. In addition to bearing witness to the power of music in Quinn’s present and past, *Open the Door* also **marks a hope for the future**. “I have worked hard and passionately to bring this music to life, and I now want to give it the chance to be heard in circles beyond those that are my own,” explains Quinn. “In the spirit of the title, I want to use this record to ‘open the door’ to the next stage of my career.”

Musically, *Open the Door* draws on an eclectic pool of influences whose style and aesthetic both acted as a springboard in Quinn’s artistic development and brought her joy. Specifically, Quinn makes **tribute** to vocal jazz innovators **Abbey Lincoln and Betty Carter**; composers **Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, and Kurt Weill**; the music of classic-era **Disney films**; the harmonic palettes of **Ethiopian pianist Mulatu Astatke**; and the widespread musical influence on the New Orleans scene by the late **Ellis Marsalis**. As Quinn processed through the works of each of these stellar musicians, she began to find not just what resonated with her, but *why* certain music resonated with her. It was during this time that Quinn began to truly personalize each of the songs that would eventually become

the music of *Open the Door* and created, through her arrangements, a way to uniquely display both the original intention of the songs and the content and angles within each that so powerfully struck a chord within her.

While the majority of the arrangements on *Open the Door* were written prior to those early 2020 recording sessions, it is the handful of arrangements composed during the pandemic that provide the breadth of contrast and variety to the album. “**Cry Again**,” one of the few compositions by Ellis Marsalis that features lyrics, is performed by Quinn as a **duet with guitarist Ed Barrett**. The raw emotional content of the lyrics, combined with the open, resounding nature of the vocal/guitar duet, paints a lingering and vivid picture that hangs on to listeners’ heartstrings. “**I wanted to include this tune to pay homage to the oeuvre of the late New Orleans pianist**,” says Quinn. “[Ellis Marsalis] was the founder of the Jazz Studies program at UNO from which I recently graduated, and a huge influence on generations of jazz musicians in New Orleans.” Another visionary arrangement on the album is Quinn’s take on the Duke Ellington classic, “**The Single Petal of a Rose**.” While the original composition is a heavily pianistic instrumental piece, Quinn’s arrangement features her voice in a myriad of multi-tracks in continual dialogue with the lush timbres of the baritone saxophone, played by Kate Campbell-Strauss. “I am utterly enchanted by the result of this collaboration,” Quinn says. “The call and response between the horn and the voices evokes a conversation among flowers encountered while on a walk in the woods.”

The band present on *Open the Door* was a **specific combination of musicians hand-picked by Quinn** for their distinctive personalities and traits, and **shared reverence for the music and its lineage**, but who had not played in that specific line-up prior to the start of the project. “I think it’s kind of cool to have called on this unique grouping of musicians, all of whom know each other but really haven’t had many opportunities to play together, and to witness them engaging with one another and with my arrangements with such respect, attention to detail, humor, and, of course, immense talent,” Quinn says. “Each player brought a subtlety of approach and finesse to their craft on this record, and the blend of their voices elevates the arrangements to a level of unity and beauty that is well beyond what I could ever have imagined.” *Open the Door* features **guitarist Ed Barrett, bassist Ben Fox, drummer Brad Webb, tenor and baritone saxophonist Kate Campbell-Strauss, and tenor saxophonist and flautist Brent Rose**.

With *Open the Door*, Anna Laura Quinn presents to her listeners not merely an album, but a steady, thoughtful exhibition of art that is at times painted, at others sculpted, and, on occasion, found riding on the invisible particles and seconds that join each moment to the next. From self-doubt and heartbreak to that which is wondrous and transient, and every feeling between, Quinn both sheds light and shrouds herself in shadow as she holds open the door for listeners to step through from that which they know to that for which only she – joyfully, exuberantly, and with the rarest of knowing smiles – holds the key.

Open the Door releases on **Next Level**, an imprint of **Outside in Music**, on **February 18th, 2022**.

NEXTLEVEL is an imprint of Outside in Music, dedicated to early career and first-time bandleaders seeking to make an impact on the music. **OUTSIDE IN MUSIC** is a record label and media company that exists to serve musicians. We are a community that strives to lift its artists above the noise of the 21st-century music industry and make music that expresses the sounds of today's wide-ranging jazz and creative music scene.

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