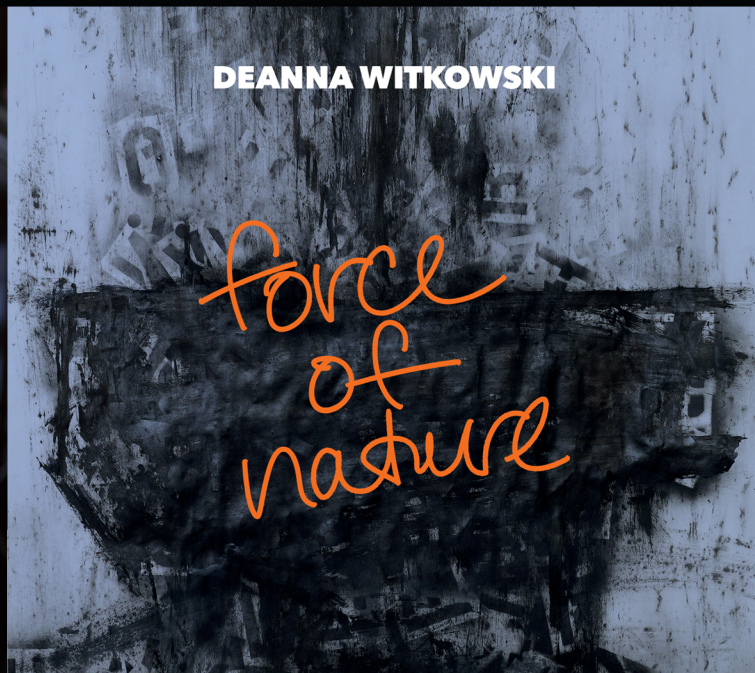


DEANNA WITKOWSKI **FORCE OF NATURE**



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Force of Nature is pianist Deanna Witkowski's lovingly conceived and radiantly realized seventh album. A multi-levelled masterpiece, the album displays Witkowski's glorious musicianship and encyclopedic command of genres and techniques, while also revisiting the compositional genius of the major 20th-century artist Mary Lou Williams. The album also documents the firm musical and spiritual connection between Williams and Witkowski.

Released right after Witkowski's first book – *Mary Lou Williams: Music for the Soul*, her detailed and engaging biography of Williams – *Force of Nature* caps off 20 years of immersive research into the life and work of the woman known as "The First Lady of Jazz."

To fans and students of her music, Mary Lou (1910 - 1981) stands tall as one of the best-known but still undervalued women in jazz history: a marvelous and harmonically intrepid pianist; a pioneering composer and arranger, admired (and hired) by Duke Ellington; an influential educator and early adopter of bebop; and one of the first jazz artists to infuse her music with her Catholic faith, most notably in three jazz Masses.

To the well-traveled and exhilarating pianist-composer Witkowski, Mary Lou is all those things and something more: an inspiration, certainly, but also a guiding light – and, in absentia, a life coach for the deeply religious Witkowski, whose own resume includes an impressive number of award-winning sacred-music compositions. "I think of Mary Lou as a mentor, because she's someone who was able to really integrate her spirituality, her Catholicism, with her music," says Witkowski.

Over the last two decades, Williams's music has become an ongoing source of study and interpretation for Witkowski, finally leading her to a new hometown and a side career as a biographer-academic, currently working on her Ph.D. in jazz studies at the University of Pittsburgh.

Tracklisting

1. **Gjon Mili Jam Session** | 4:48
2. **Aries** (from *Zodiac Suite*) | 3:03
3. **Taurus** (from *Zodiac Suite*) | 3:36
4. **Cancer** (from *Zodiac Suite*)
/ **Act of Contrition** (from *Mary Lou's Mass*) | 5:33
5. **Lonely Moments** | 5:58
6. **What's Your Story, Morning Glory?**
[written by Jack Lawrence, Mary Lou Williams, Paul Francis Webster]
/ **Ghost of Love**
[written by Jack Lawrence, Mary Lou Williams, Sharon Pease] | 9:54
7. **Force of Nature** [written by Deanna Witkowski] | 5:35
Tilapia Tunes (BMI)
8. **Intermission** | 6:14
9. **Dirge Blues** | 7:08
10. **Carcinoma** | 3:56
11. **Stompin' at the Savoy**
[written by Benny Goodman, Chick William Webb, Edgar Sampson] | 6:07
12. **My Blue Heaven**
[written by Walter Donaldson, George Whiting] | 8:54

All compositions by Mary Lou Williams except where noted

The Band

Deanna Witkowski, piano
Clay Jenkins, trumpet (1, 4, 5, 10)
Daniel Foose, bass (1-7, 10, 11)
Scott Latzky, drums (1-7, 11)
Dwayne Dolphin, bass (8, 9, 12)
Roger Humphries drums (8,9, 10)

New Release

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