

Newbury Weekly News - *gig review*

LAUGHTER IN THE RAIN (tour Bromley)

Heading for the top

Light lunch with Julia Farino, at The Corn Exchange

JAZZ

An intimate sounding and relaxed vocalist, Julia Farino made her second appearance this year at The Corn Exchange on Friday afternoon.

With sympathetic support from Phil Mead at the piano and David Moses on double bass she cruised through a number of popular standards and songs associated with the world of jazz.

Duke Ellington was represented by the seldom-heard *All Too Soon* and Glenn Miller by *Chattanooga Choo Choo*, delivered with a boogie beat by Phil Mead and sung with swagger by Ms Farino.

Perhaps best suited to her expressive voice and splendid timing were *Wild Is Love* and *Stars Fell On Alabama*, the latter a winsome melody that has stood the test of time and location. Somehow attempts to sing about more local areas such as *Stars Fell On Stockport* or *Brixton Market Here I Come* never seem to capture the public imagination.

Singing the rarely-heard verse first, Ms Farino tackled *Pennies From Heaven* and again showed her ability to sing on the beat and phrase intelligently.

With *Sweet Georgia Brown*, she had the opportunity to swing it at a brisk temp and, with help from the boys on piano and bass, did just that.

Farino's version of *It Never Entered My Mind* also included the verse, which does add another dimension to a moving, if melancholy song and this reading was full of pain and pathos. She certainly has all the requirements of a good jazz singer with a gift for melody, phrasing, timing and the right degree of emotive expression appropriate to each lyric.

Saving the best to almost the last, Farino sang Bobby Troup's *Meaning Of The Blues*, with plenty of emotion and skill. The ability to tell a story with dramatic effect is all part of the jazz singer's metier. This is a very moving, well constructed piece of music but it needs all the skills and commitment of vocalist and instrumentalists to do it justice. Farino had no problem.

She may be relatively new to jazz singing but with a programme and performance like this, she will soon be in the very front rank of jazz vocalists.

Derek Ansell (reviewer Jazz Journal International)