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**SARAH M. GREER'S
"WHAT THE MUSIC SAYS DO"**

**New Album of Jazz Originals from
Twin Cities' Jazz Vocalist and Composer Sarah M. Greer
Available July 20, 2018**

Pre-order now on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [iTunes](https://www.apple.com/itunes)

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MINNEAPOLIS, July 12, 2018 – Fresh off her appearance on WCCO's Mid-Morning show and a solo show at 20th Annual Twin Cities Jazz Festival, vocalist and composer Sarah M. Greer will release her album, *What the Music Says Do* on Friday July 20, 2018.

In 2017, Greer received an Artist Initiative Award from the Minnesota State Arts Board to complete a solo album of jazz compositions. Tasked with writing and recording an original album in a year, Greer wrote a collection of songs about her love for family and friends, about expressing—and being—one's true self, and about living as a woman of color.

What the Music Says Do is Sarah M. Greer's debut studio recording and it is her exploration of the many sounds and ideas that the jazz genre can hold. Audio samples:

The album's soundscape is vast and eclectic featuring traditional songs like the jazz waltz "When We Meet" and the nostalgic "Maybe" to message songs like "Two Dimensional" and "Brown Girl Blues;" Latin-influenced offerings like "Awake" and "Fall for Me" as well as improvisations that Greer calls 'story-songs' ("Big as Sky," and "Storyteller").

Tracked in three days at the end of 2017, *What the Music Says Do* features an impressive and varied list of almost entirely local musicians. The core instrumental trio — Anthony Cox (bass), Nathan Greer (drums) and Steven Hobert (piano) — performed on all of the songs, while musicians Dean Magraw (guitar), Jake Baldwin (trumpet), Peter Whitman (clarinet, saxophone), Dave Schmalenberger (percussion) and the black women's a cappella ensemble *Give Get Sistet* made guest appearances on select tracks.

Of this collection of songs, Greer says, "I spent some time wondering if all of these songs belonged on the same record. The title — *What the Music Says Do* — came to me as I started work on the Kickstarter campaign I developed to raise additional

funds for this project. Adapted from the spiritual, 'I'm Gonna Do What the Spirit Says Do,' it captures both my experience of creating the album and my discovery while doing so that songs can be found if I simply listen for the music and then, without ego or agenda, do what it tells me to do."

What the Music Says Do opens with a brief improvisation simply titled "Beginning." "We were getting ready to start rolling on our second day in the studio and Steven, Anthony, Nate and Dean were warming up and getting musically reacquainted. And, it was Dave and Jake's first session with us. I love how relaxed everyone sounds."

"Awake Prelude" begins simply with voice and Dave Schmalenberger's percussion. Then the tune proper ("Awake") adds the trio, while Jake Baldwin's muted trumpet and Dean Magraw's electric guitar help bring the ephemeral nursery rhyme to life.

"I was moved to include an a cappella piece 'Storyteller: Privilege' because, to me, singing *is* storytelling and jazz is rooted in stories."

Bassist Anthony Cox moves to the upright bass for the nostalgic "Maybe" and Pete Whitman's clarinet transports the tune straight back to an earlier time.

In the groove-inspired "Two Dimensional," Greer strives to illuminate the experience of being a brown person who works in predominantly white spaces.

The story-song "Big As Sky" follows. Greer's voice weaves in and out of a pensive soundscape of drums, piano, electric bass and guitar.

The lilting jazz waltz "When We Meet" showcases Greer's ability to write new songs that sound like jazz standards. The arrangement features Anthony Cox on upright bass and Steven Hobert on Rhodes. Pete Whitman makes another guest appearance – this time on saxophone.

A driving electric bass line and spectral vocals from Aimee Bryant and Libby Turner set an eerie mood for the second installment of the story-song "Storyteller: Responsibility."

"I remember thinking I *should* write a blues (because this was a jazz album), but not feeling very inspired. Then the riots in Charlottesville, Virginia happened and I realized I had a lot to say about what it is like to be a black woman right now. The lyrics to 'Brown Girl Blues' arrived rapidly and in their entirety one Friday afternoon."

Greer wrote the tender ballad "If Only You Knew" for her young nieces. It is arranged simply for voice and jazz trio. "I thought about the challenges that these

little brown girls will face; that some people will decide that they are not important or capable simply because they are brown girls. I want them to know that they are beautiful and valuable.”-

The coquettish, Latin-inspired “Fall For Me” follows and demonstrates Greer’s affinity for and familiarity with the Great American Songbook.

“Be the Light” gives a gigantic and grateful nod to the many other genres (in this case African American Gospel and Reggae) and traditions that influence jazz. The a cappella ensemble *Give Get Sistet* elevates this rousing, spiritual-inspired offering. Saxophonist Pete Whitman, trumpeter Jake Baldwin and guitarist Dean Magraw return.

“It was such a gift and education to work with the musicians who joined me for this project. As an improviser, I relied on these amazing collaborators to bring their experience and talents to my music.”

What the Music Says Do was recorded by Steve Kaul at Wild Sound Recording Studio. Greer worked with Kaul and bassist Anthony Cox to complete the final mixes.

Tracklist:

1. Beginning (featuring Jake Baldwin, Dean Magraw & Dave Schmalenberger)
2. Awake Prelude (featuring Dave Schmalenberger)
3. Awake (featuring Jake Baldwin, Dean Magraw & Dave Schmalenberger)
4. Storyteller: Privilege (featuring Aimee K. Bryant & Elizabeth “Libby” Turner)
5. Maybe (featuring Pete Whitman)
6. Two Dimensional
7. Big as Sky (featuring Dean Magraw)
8. When We Meet (featuring Peter Whitman)
9. Storyteller: Responsibility (featuring Aimee K. Bryant & Elizabeth “Libby”Turner)
10. Brown Girl Blues (featuring Jake Baldwin & Dean Magraw)
11. If Only You Knew
12. Fall for Me
13. Be the Light (featuring *Give Get Sistet*, Jake Baldwin, Dean Magraw & Pete Whitman)

Audio Samples: www.sarahmgreer.com/_wtmsd

Sarah M. Greer is a fiscal year 2017 recipient of an Artist Initiative grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature; and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Sarah M. Greer is available for phone or in person interviews. Please contact her at 608-338-6840 or sg@sarahmgreer.com to request a time.

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