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### **INFLUENTIAL VOCALIST/MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST/SONGWRITER/ ARRANGER PAUL JOST RELEASES DOUBLE-DISC LIVE ALBUM** **WHILE WE WERE GONE** **Coming October 29, 2021**

*"A creative force that deserves to be added to the list of great male jazz vocalists of all time."  
--Peter McClaren, Jazz in Europe*

**PAUL JOST's** newest album, **WHILE WE WERE GONE**, is a double disc album recorded live at the Soapbox Gallery, an art and performance space in Brooklyn, NY. Jost and his band, which comprises some of the top New York area musicians, includes **JIM RIDL** on piano, **DEAN JOHNSON** on bass, **TIM HORNER** on drums, and **LORIN COHEN** and **MARTIN WIND** subbing on bass on several tunes.

Jost and the band began performing live just one day a month at the Soapbox Gallery when the Covid-19 lockdown started easing up in New York City. The venue recorded the performances, and after five months, Jost had enough material to fill two CDs. He originally intended to release a few tracks digitally, but after a recent performance in Los Angeles, Dan Davilla, a jazz fan who has been an executive producer for several vocal jazz albums, convinced him to release the music on CD.

The hallmark of Jost's appeal is his extraordinary ability to connect with his listeners on an emotional level. He is a passionate storyteller who interprets lyrics and melodies in ways that reveal the beating heart within a song. He says, "I like to present songs in ways that perhaps no one has heard before. It's not that I'm just trying to be different, but I have my own perspectives that I try to present truthfully and honestly."

He did not set out to make a political album, but he feels so deeply about certain social issues, that as an artist who always tries to get at a deeper truth, many of the songs inevitably take on a moral hue. He opens Disc 1, which he titled "Poetic Justice," with a sequence of songs and poetry, starting with a soulful version of "Shenandoah." Jost says, "I truly love this country, which is why I open with the melody of "Shenandoah" that ends with a phrase from "The Star Spangled Banner." I know how lucky I am to be born here and to have the opportunities afforded me, but that doesn't mean we don't have a lot of room for improvement." "Shenandoah" moves into "Lies of Convenience," a spoken piece he wrote about the lies we sometimes tell ourselves because it's easier than facing the truth. "Lies of Convenience" segues into "Forever," a short piece he wrote in memory of George Floyd and those never truly silenced by hate, and concludes with an excerpt of a tune he wrote called "Who Says?" Jost then transitions to his reimagined arrangement of "Bye Bye Blackbird," by Ray Henderson and Mort Dixon, that touches more overtly on racial injustice.

Disc 2, titled "Appeal to Reason," opens with a spoken piece about the January 6 insurrection, which he ends with a touching version of "If I Ruled the World." Jost always has a unique take on the meaning of songs, as he does on "Ev'rybody's Talkin'," the Fred Neil tune that made its debut in the movie *Midnight Cowboy*. In a

languid, stirring performance, Jost reconstructs this piece to express the initial awareness of confusion and anguish of recognizing one's own unraveling mind.

Though these CDs include some Classic Rock, Pop and a few originals, many of the titles may be recognized as "standards," but there is nothing standard in the approach Jost takes. Randy Newman is one of Jost's favorite composers, and he covers two of Newman's -- "Feels Like Home" and "Marie." Jost is also a formidable and prolific songwriter. He has written over 40 CDs for major music libraries, and his music is heard daily in over 750 markets throughout the United States. He is also a four category Billboard Song Contest Winner and two of his songs, "A Book Faded Brown" and "Half The Time," were recorded by The Band (*Jubilation*), Carl Perkins (*Friends, Families and Legends*) and Rick Danko (*The Last Waltz*). Jost wrote "Livin' in the Wrong Time" in 1995 and is included here on **WHILE WE WERE GONE**. It first appeared on his album, *Simple Life*, at his wife's urging because the song remained relevant to today's social and political climate.

He is drawn to musicians who approach music with the same guiding principles and sensitivities. He and Jim Ridl have been friends and cohorts for 27 years. Jost says, "Jim can play anything. He has incredible facility, fantastic ears, and boundless creativity." Jost worked as a drummer with bassist Dean Johnson over 30 years ago and says he immediately fell in love with his approach after playing just a few bars together. Jost paid perhaps the highest compliment one musician can pay another when he first heard Tim Horner and said to him, "I want to play just like you." For Jost, the band is more than a group of musicians. It is a brotherhood of like-minded souls, where serving the music always comes first.

Jost has performed on numerous albums over his long career. **WHILE WE WERE GONE** is his fifth album as a leader and follows *Simple Life* (2019), *Peace and Love* (2017), *Breaking Through* (2014), and *Can't Find My Way Home* (2013). *Jazz in Europe* has called Jost "a modern-day oracle of jazz vocals" and *All About Jazz* says, "Paul Jost makes every song so personally his own that it's easy to forget anyone else ever sang them."

A multi-instrumentalist, Paul Jost plays guitar and harmonica, which he does beautifully on live performances and on **WHILE WE WERE GONE**. But before turning his full attention to singing in 2014, he had a long career as a drummer, recording and performing as a sideman with Billy Eckstine, Mark Murphy, Dr. John, Bucky Pizzarelli, Joe Farrell, Ron Carter, Ann Hampton Calloway, Sylvia Sims, and George Mesterhazy, to name just a few. He performs around the world and is a mainstay on the New York City jazz scene. He had a two-month stint at SMOKE, performing with Orrin Evans, and guest appearances with vibraphonist Joe Locke at Dizzy's Coca Cola Club at the Lincoln Center. He performs regularly around the city at popular clubs like Mezzrow and Jazz at Kitano, and he currently has an ongoing residency at the internationally acclaimed jazz club 55 Bar. Jost says, "I enjoy playing small clubs and love connecting with the audience and sharing the experience together, and I try to create that same intimate feel when I play larger venues too."

Many critics, contemporaries, and music fans consider Paul Jost to be one of the best male jazz vocalists since Mark Murphy, who, like Jost, was known for his edgy, unconventional singing and dramatic recitations. The live recordings on **WHILE WE WERE GONE** are soulful and intimate. It is a journey into the profound, elegant, and moral universe that Jost inhabits.

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**WHILE WE WERE GONE** is set for release on October 29, 2021 and will be available everywhere.

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