

A silhouette of a woman, Kat Orlando, playing a saxophone. She is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right. The background is a vibrant sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with the sky transitioning from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange and yellow near the horizon. The water's surface is visible at the bottom, reflecting the light from the sky. The overall mood is artistic and evocative.

Kat Orlando

FUNK SAXOPHONIST

*“Don’t play the saxophone.
Let it play you.”*

Charlie Parker

KAT ORLANDO. She’s the Queen of Sax in Detroit. The moody, funky, gritty notes that Kat plays on her venerable brass instrument have energized the stages of nightclubs and festivals across Detroit for decades. She is a remarkable artist and entertainer.

Kat spans multiple music genres. She can lay down a heavy Funk melody that will mesmerize an audience, then bust out with some Rock music, and then easily shift to Pop, Soul, or Jazz. Her musical versatility and repertoire appeals to a wide range of fans.

Kat Orlando

A photograph of Kat Orlando performing on stage. She is wearing a leopard print dress and is singing into a microphone. The stage is lit with green and blue lights. In the background, there is a drum set and a saxophone.

Kat Orlando began her music career playing the harmonica at the age of 8. It was mostly a hobby at that point but 7 years later she became fascinated with the music of Herbie Mann, Jethro Tull and Traffic - and particularly the flute elements of their songs. So at age 15 she began taking flute lessons and, after gaining skills, she paired up with a guitarist and began playing at coffee houses in the Detroit area.

At that time, Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross and Grace Slick were burning up the airwaves. Inspired by their singing, she became a devotee. She decided that singing would also become a central element of her music career. She chose R&B and Rock as her two favorite music genres.

Upon graduating high school, Kat joined her first rock group and played at community centers and small events. In some cases, she would find herself being overpowered by the loud bands she played in. A drummer friend suggested she pick up the sax, since the fingering was very similar to flute. First, she would move to Denver, a city she believed was the next LA, because national artists were recording and living outside of Denver and Boulder.

Kat searched for a music mentor to develop her skills on the sax. She found that in George Keith, a jazz bebop guy she perceived as a jazz guru. He schooled many local players, including Tom Scott.

After honing her skills over the next two years, Kat joined the Rock band, "Winter Heat", and began performing at night clubs and concert venues. In addition to playing sax, she also served as lead singer for the group. Her most memorable performance was at a "Women In Music" concert in Boulder, Colorado that drew a crowd of over 12,000 people.

In 1983, Kat created the "Kat Orlando Band" and played R&B and Dance hits at various nightclubs and ski resorts in Denver. Two years later, and restless for growth, Kat moved to California to work the local music scene and make contacts with music industry people.

After playing with a variety of bands for the next three years, she decided it was time to head back to Detroit. Upon returning she quickly got picked up by "Tee Turner and Headline" and performed as lead singer and saxophonist. Specializing in R&B and Dance music, they gigged for four years as the house band at Pier 500 and did a 2-month tour in Canada.

Kat Orlando

In 1994, Kat joined "Art of Fact", an 8-piece horn-driven R&B dance band that played at casinos, nightclubs, festivals, corporate parties, and weddings. They had a very successful 14-year run.

In 2003, Kat joined the popular 6-piece R&B dance band, "Hidden Agenda," as a saxophonist and vocalist. They perform to this day at casinos, festivals, nightclubs, weddings, and corporate parties.

For Kat, music is her essence.

"It is an expression of me, of how I think about music, of how I talk to the audience."

In 2013, as a related endeavor, Kat began hosting an internet radio talk show entitled, "Kat's Funkaholic Radio Detroit". It features original music Funk, R&B and Jazz from Independent artists around the world.

In 2013, Kat also was proud to be nominated for a Detroit Music Award as "Outstanding Funk Vocalist". In 2015 she received another nomination in the category of "Urban Funk Musician."

How does she view herself?

"I'm both singer and musician. These are equal parts of expression for me. As a singer I try to express all emotions you can feel through a song lyrics and rhythm - connecting to an audience, getting them involved. The sax is like the voice - evoking emotion. It has become an identity for me."

Kat has recorded 3 albums and over 40 songs. She continues to perform throughout the Metro-Detroit area with her husband, Larry, in the R&B cover band, "Hidden Agenda". It's her own group "Kat's Funkaholic" that brings her out as a dynamic performer, playing covers by Sheila E to Chaka Khan as well as showcasing her own funk-infused dance-friendly songs from her CDs.



Kat's recently released EP, "Poster Child", fuses R&B, Funk and a little Jazz.

A complete artist, Kat is known primarily for her sax skills but also plays flute on stage and serves as lead vocalist. She is one of Detroit's most popular artists and one of the few female saxophonists on the music scene.

Enjoy this sample from a recent performance:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0wQrDc_F7c#t=15





Kat Orlando

“If one note, one measure, one verse, or one song that I play serves to entertain or inspire a single person at one of my performances, I’ve done my job and I am satisfied. I love to share my art with others.”