

Recognized for her multi-faceted artistry and vocal prowess by industry insiders and discerning music buyers alike, Dallas-born singer-songwriter Sandra St. Victor has been captivating audiences with her fusion of R&B, rock, gospel and jazz for over two decades now, first as a member of the innovative trio The Family Stand beginning in 1988, then as a soulstress in her own right via her much-treasured 1996 Warner Brothers set, "Mack Diva Saves The World," and 2001's "Gemini: Both Sides."

That music would become her chosen career was evident from an early age, when growing up in Dallas, Sandra began singing in church. Inspired and influenced by a diversity of music – from the jazz stylings of Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan and Nancy Wilson to the out-and-out funk of Rufus & Chaka Khan, The Ohio Players and Sly & The Family Stone along with the pop and rock of Elton John and Jimi Hendrix – Sandra's natural penchant for creativity found expression first at Arts Magnet School and then at the University of Kansas where she toyed with the idea of pursuing a career in opera: "like Miss Leontyne Price. But I realized that I would get bored because I couldn't create [with opera] I didn't see enough potential for growth or development for myself creatively in that arena."



Photo: Chris Roque



Photo: Eric Johnson

After honing her skills in her home state, then a major move to New York City, Sandra found herself in the studio doing backing vocals for international artists and subsequently on the road touring with, amongst others, Roy Ayers' Ubiquity and Chaka Khan.

One such collaboration linked her with future band and musical soul-mates, V. Jeffrey Smith & Peter Lord. This trio later became The Family Stand.

Incarnated first as Evon Geffries & The Stand and signed to Atlantic Records in 1988. Much-loved by critics and those who did get a chance to hear it, the trio's debut set "Chapters" contained the scorching R&B charted single "Stand And Deliver."

The follow-up album with the now-renamed Family Stand was a 1990 release, "Chain" included the international hit, "Ghetto Heaven".

The response to "Chain" (which also included the

songs "In Summer I Fall" and "Sweet Liberation") led to U.S. touring with Ziggy Marley & The Melody Makers, The Red Hot Chili Peppers, The Rollins Band and trips to Japan and Europe.

In 1992, The Family Stand began working on what would be its swan song set as an original unit:

"Moon In Scorpio" was an ambitious project that covered a wide musical range, with an emphasis on rock, designed to push the boundaries of what a 'black' group was expected to do musically. The set is now recognized as a must-have classic, but at the time without the kind of across-the-board support it needed, received little exposure and the group began turning its attention to writing and production work.

The trio worked with Paula Abdul on her Virgin album "Spellbound" (which contained the gold single, "Rush, Rush"), with the New York duo Aftershock and with Daryl Hall (of Hall & Oates) on his 1993 solo album for Epic.

In 1993, Sandra began working on what she expected would be her first solo album for Elektra Records but executive changes meant that the proposed record never surfaced. Free of her

contract with Elektra, Sandra moved to Warner Brothers and in 1996, Sandra's brilliant "Mack Diva Saves The World" was released. The album was filled with soulful highlights from the infectious first single "Rise", to the emotion-packed opus "Since You've Been Gone." Tracks like "MPH!" and "Knocked Up And Locked Down" were a testament to Sandra's willingness to step to the cutting edge, lyrically and musically and it was no surprise that the album quickly became a critical favorite.

In mid-2000, Sandra began work on "Gemini: Both Sides," a soul-filled artistic and musical triumph for the singer, songwriter and producer, released initially via her own website, sandrastvictor.com, subsequently



Photo: James Nichols



Photo: Joep Eykens



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picked up by Expansion Records in the UK & JVC in Japan. "It's been a very liberating experience for me as an artist to have all kinds of control in my hands, from deciding what to put on the record to choosing the artwork. It's been very freeing." Sandra racked up further career achievements, duetting with the late legendary Curtis Mayfield on the song "I Believe In You" on what would be his final album, "New World Order," an event she describes as "the pinnacle in my career at this point". As a songwriter, St. Victor's work continues to bear fruit. Prince recorded her song "Soul Sanctuary" for

his "Emancipation" album. Longtime friend Chaka Khan cut Sandra's "I'll Never Be Another Fool" for her set "Come 2 My House." One of her cuts, "Like Wow!" was the first single from teen pop star Leslie Carter's DreamWorks debut album, and was featured in the hit movie "Shrek". "Ghetto Heaven" was covered by late guitarist Hiram Bullock with Lalah Hathaway, and rap artist Common on his best-selling "Like Water For Chocolate" album (as a duet with D'Angelo, and with Macy Gray featured as the female vocalist in the European remix video for the song). St. Victor went on to collaborate with Lalah Hathaway on her 2008 release, "Self Portrait," writing three songs with the legendary daughter.

Never content to rest on her laurels, this musical chameleon stay busy with various things: she's featured in the documentary of Bill Wlthers, "Still Bill", has performed and recorded for the Sly Stone Tribute album of Steve Berstein's Millennial Territory Orchestra with Vernon Reid, Bernie Worrell and other name acts out of the NYC music scene. Furthermore, her performance of classic babyboomer hit, "This Girl Is A Woman Now" was included in a package to Oprah Winfrey from the employees of O Magazine as a goodbye gift for her departure.

In her adopted home, The Netherlands, where she has already written for premier artists Gordon, Idols winner Boris, soul singer Rose, and Holland's most successful pop/soul star Trijntje Oosterhuis, Sandra continues to perform and record, and has released another incarnation, Sandra St. Victor's Sinner Child. A collection of soulful



Photo: Karsten Staiger



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Photo: Leon van Raaij

dance floor bangers produced by Mark de Clive-Lowe. Going even further into the genre, she is featured on soulful house Maestro of Blaze's, "Josh Milan Presents Honeycomb Music Volume 1", to the ecstatic delight of club music lovers.

This year, the busy songstress has completed her first full length project in over a decade for a Shanachie Entertainment release this fall. The album, "Oya Grooves" will sate the appetite of long standing fans, and draw new ones to the fold with it's haunting energy, funk foundation, soul stirring lyric, and naturally, vocal emotiveness.

SSV's innovative live solo concerts and appearances, which include her pet projects Daughters Of Soul, Amsterdam Celebrates, which celebrated Bill Withers recently with Mr. Withers in attendance, her groups The Family Stand, SSV's Sinner Child, Sandra St. Victor Naked & Lovely (her acoustic outing), inspire and mesmerize audiences worldwide.

"Oya Grooves" further establishes Ms. St. Victor as a barrier-breaking musical trendsetter whose unique artistry puts her in a category of her very own.

David Nathan - British Ambassador of Soul
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Photo: Bianca Scharroo



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