

Press Release

Michelle Pollace Breaks Decade-Long Creative Hiatus with New EP

“I’m Just Happy to Be Here” Drops October 25, 2024

SAN JOSE, CA—After a decade-long hiatus from recording, award-winning composer and multi-instrumentalist **Michelle Pollace** is back. Her new EP, *I’m Just Happy to Be Here*, blends jazz sensibility, Latin and Brazilian rhythms, and electronic elements, reflecting her rich musical heritage and demonstrating her pursuit of reinvention. The four-song work not only marks her return to releasing original music after needing to focus on her son’s educational needs, it also marks a shift in her evolving sound.

Michelle began exploring electronic music production during the pandemic shutdown, a period of intense experimentation that culminated in *I’m Just Happy to Be Here*. Citing Bonobo and Jazzanova as primary production influences, the EP offers electronic music that veers into future jazz, broken beat, and house territory.

The EP’s first single, “New Brighton,” is a whimsical bossa-tinged groove that recalls a rare feeling of freedom during the restriction of shutdown. “Tal Vez Para Voar” (Perhaps to Fly) melds jazz piano, deep-house groove, and featured vocal by talented Brazilian singer Lola Leona into a danceable track that’s right at home in playlists featuring Bonobo’s “No Reason” and similar songs. “Be Right Back-Remixed” re-imagines a work from Michelle’s previous release, critically acclaimed acoustic Latin Jazz album *New Beginning* (2013); the resulting reggaeton-inspired bop features Kristen Strom’s original sax lines chopped and flipped into a new, playful melody, symbolizing Michelle picking up where she left off artistically while adding a new twist. “Alone Together” ventures into leftfield and shifts between duple and 6/8 time, an electronic version of the composition Michelle created as a result of being awarded a composer’s grant from San Jose Jazz in 2023.

Coming as complete surprise, the grant award made Michelle realize that people in her community still valued her artistic contributions; it had been ten years since Michelle released original music (shortly after releasing *New Beginning*, Michelle began advocating for her son and ultimately homeschooled him to best meet educational challenges he was facing). This grant, plus her son’s newfound educational success and independence, gave Michelle the resolve to release some of her electronic pieces; the result is *I’m Just Happy to Be Here*. Given her backstory, Michelle’s choice of EP title is clear.

Michelle’s diverse musical journey spans decades and includes recording/performing with Lou Harrison’s renown Gamelan Si Betty (Indonesian/modern classical orchestral ensemble) and forming the world-fusion Latin jazz group Zarate Pollace Project with Abel Zarate (Malo guitarist and cowriter of the hit “Suavecito”) to release *Soul Redemption* (2005). Michelle is best known as a Latin Jazz pianist, composer and band leader. Her solo debut, *New Beginning* (2013), garnered significant jazz-radio airplay and numerous positive reviews, including landing on a couple “Best of 2013” lists. She also co-authored a music-education book, *Musicreation* in 2003 (out of print).

Michelle’s dedication to music, despite life’s interruptions, her exploration of new musical directions, and her personal journey provide a compelling story of a unique and determined artist.

For more information, interviews, or to request a media kit, please contact:

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