

# ISQ - Biography

This quartet takes the conventional jazz line-up as a mere starting point. ISQ are Irene Serra on vocals, Richard Sadler on double bass, Chris Nickolls on drums and John Crawford on piano. Their second studio album "Too" was a Time Out London Critics Choice in 2015 and has seen them firmly establish a reputation as an emerging force in both creativity and performance. Their highly-anticipated third album is due for release in Autumn 2018.

## Band Members :

### Irene Serra - Vocals

*"...singer Irene Serra has a strong stage presence and a compelling vocal tone, which she uses to great effect on original songs that defy categorisation... you can sense a good few awards and an international tour in the offing"*

### *Jazzwise*

Born in Milan, Italy, Irene moved to Denmark at the age of 3. From a very young age she developed her love for singing whilst performing in choirs, musicals and church. After moving back to Milan, she started studying Jazz at the age of 16 with the renowned Italian Jazz singer Tiziana Ghiglioni at the Academy of Music in Milan.

She moved to London in 1999 to continue her music studies and completed a Masters in Music (Jazz Studies - Distinction in Performance) at the prestigious Guildhall School Of Music and Drama.

She has performed various styles of music ranging from jazz, blues, bossanova and soul in venues in and around London such as the Barbican Centre (where she performed as part of Wynton Marsalis' premiere of his Abyssinian Mass), Ronnie Scotts, Pizza Express Jazz Club in Dean Street, the 606 Jazz Club, the Union Chapel in Islington, Kings Place, the Forge Venue, the Hackney Empire, Theatre Royal Stratford East, and the National Theatre.

Irene was one of the semi-finalists in The Brussels International Young Jazz Singer in 2008 and was the only European finalist in the Shure Jazz Voice Competition at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 2009.

She has also worked extensively as a vocalist and session singer in Spain, Italy, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Greece and the UK and currently teaches Jazz Voice at Royal Holloway University and Middlesex University.

### **Richard Sadler - Double Bass**

*"Sadler's cushioning bass sound purred under a steady drip of soft treble notes.." John Fordham - The Guardian*

Regularly playing across all genres - such as jazz, pop, blues and country - Richard continues to work extensively as a musician, composer and sound engineer.

He has worked as a studio session musician (Ray Davies (Kinks), Paul Weller, Tom Jones) and as a jazz musician, he has played with many of the top British Jazz musicians such as Huw Warren, Jean Toussaint, and Tom Cawley.

He was a founding member of the Neil Cowley Trio and recorded the first three albums and toured extensively with

the trio, contributing to the writing and arranging. In 2006, they won the prestigious 'BBC Jazz Award'.

He has played at major festivals in the UK such as Glastonbury, The Big Chill and the London Jazz Festival and has performed at all the major music venues from the Queen Elizabeth Hall to the Southbank Centre and to Ronnie Scott's.

Richard has also toured extensively, playing jazz clubs and festivals all around the world such as the USA (Rochester), Canada (Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto), Australia (Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne), New Zealand (Auckland, Queenstown) Thailand and most of Europe.

His TV appearances include Later With Jools Holland, and RTE Eire

his radio performances have seen him play sessions for BBC Radio 3 and 6 (Jazz Line Up and Tom Robinson)

### **John Crawford - Piano**

*"A glorious piano solo...everyone there that night agreed that a man to watch out for is pianist John Crawford, a skillful and imaginative soloist"*

*John Childs, Jazzwise Magazine*

John was born in London of English/Spanish Parents. His father played Blues piano, his mother would later introduce him to Latin music of all kinds.

As a jazz pianist he has worked with the leading British Jazz musicians such as Tony Coe, Jason Yarde, Harvie S, Dave O'Higgins, Tony Kofi, US3, Roger Beaujolais, Gilad Atzmon, Byron Wallen, Annie Whitehead. And in the Latin world he has played with Airto Moreira and Giovanni Hidalgo, Eumir

Deodato, Ed Motta, Tito Allen, Herman Oliveira, Henry Fiol, Luis Felipe Gonzalez, Snowboy, Guida da Palma, Negrocan, Roberto Pla, He is also a founding member of the popular band Grupo X.

He has worked with pop artists as successful and diverse as Bjork, Tanita Tikaram, Lewis Taylor, Andy Williams, Kirsty McColl, Rui Veloso and Babyface.

John has performed around the world at venues such as Montreal Jazz Festival, North Sea Jazz Festival, Getxo Jazz Festival, Ronnie Scotts, Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, the 606 and Royal Albert Hall.

He is also the author of 'Exploring Latin Piano' 1 and 2 published by Schott Music.

### **Chris Nickolls - Drums**

*"...this band was very close knit and...Chris Nickolls on drums was integral." Review of Tony Woods Project, Jazz UK Magazine. Aug 2012*

Chris started playing the drums at the age of 15 influenced by rock and funk music. When he moved to London in 2001 he was introduced to jazz and world music.

Since then he has performed and recorded with Andy Sheppard, Gilad Atzmon, Laurence Cottle and Jean Toussaint, Michael Garrick and many others, and has supported Jason Lindner and Mark Guiliana.

This has seen him travel the world and play all major venues and festivals in the UK, Europe, Poland and Russia, including opening for Diana Krall at the Royal Albert Hall.